FAIRY TALES.

"WHEN INSTANTLY THERE CAME TROTTING ALONG A POWERFUL BEAR, AND BEGAN A FIERCE CONTEST WITH THE BULL."—*Page* 81. *Frontispiece.*

FAIRY TALES.

BY

MARK LEMON.

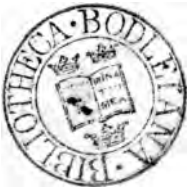
With upwards of Fifty Illustrations

BY

RICHARD DOYLE

AND

CHARLES H. BENNETT.



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CHRONICLES

OF

THE THREE SISTERS.

Illustrated

By C. H. BENNETT.

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BOOK THE FIRST.

HOW THE RUINED BARON BARTERS AWAY HIS THREE DAUGHTERS, WULFILDA, ADELHEID, AND BERTHA.

THERE was a rich and noble Baron who squandered away his money and estates, his goods and chattels; he lived like a prince, kept open house every day and all day long. Whoever presented himself, whether knight or squire of high

or low degree, was feasted and entertained for three successive days, and all his guests were sure to go contented away. His court swarmed with comely and high-born pages, besides footmen and attendants in gorgeous liveries; his stables were filled with choice horses, and his kennels with well-bred hounds. All this extravagance consumed his treasures. He mortgaged town after town, sold his jewels and plate, and at last turned away his servants and shot his dogs. Of all his property and wealth there remained only a virtuous wife, three beautiful daughters, and an old castle, situated close by a forest. To this castle he retired, forsaken by all the world. The Baroness, with the help of her three daughters, was obliged to attend to all the household matters, and a sad mess was made of them. The Baron was dissatisfied with

his plain and wholesome fare; he grew peevish and fretful. One fine summer's morning, in a fit of spleen, he took up his hunting-spear and set out for the wood, in hopes of killing a fallow deer, and procuring for himself a more savoury meal. This forest had long had the repute of being enchanted; many a traveller was known to have been bewildered in it, and some had never returned, having either been strangled by malignant gnomes, or torn in pieces by wild beasts. The Baron had no faith in the invisible powers; he went on boldly, crossing hill and dale, and forcing his way through bushes and thickets, but could start no game. Finding himself weary he sat down under a spacious oak, took a slice or two of bread and a little salt out of his pocket, with the intention of eating his dinner. Before he began he chanced to lift up his eyes, when behold

he saw a monstrous bear stalking towards him. The Baron shuddered at the sight; he could not fly, and he was not prepared with weapons for bear-hunting. In his

stalking towards him.

He sees a monstrous bear

distress he took his hunting-spear in his hand, and set himself in a position of defence. The monster advanced still nearer; but at last stopped short, and growled out intelligibly the following salutation:—

"So you are plundering my honey-tree, auda-

cious robber; but be assured thy life shall pay for thy insolence!"

"I have no intention of stealing your honey," answered the Baron; "I am no thief, but a true and honourable knight. If your appetite is keen, share my meal, I pray you, and be my guest to-day."

But the beast disdained the Baron's fare, and growled again in great wrath: "Do not think to redeem thy life at so poor a purchase; but promise me thy eldest daughter, Wulfilda, to wife this instant, else I will eat you up."

The Baron, in the anguish of his distress, would have promised the bear his three daughters, with his wife into the bargain, so great was his terror, had the brute desired them.

"She shall be yours," replied the hunter, beginning to recover himself; "but only on condition

that you ransom and fetch her home according to the country custom."

"A bargain! Give me your hand," replied the bear, and held out his shaggy paw. "In seven days I will ransom and carry home my spouse. The sum shall be a hundred pounds weight of gold."

"Agreed, with all my heart," returned the Baron.

They then separated in peace, the bear stalking back to his den, and the Baron, hastening out of the terrible wood, made the best of his way to his castle, where he arrived at starlight, weary and out of spirits.

A bear capable of speaking and acting reasonably can never be a natural bear, but must needs be enchanted. And the Baron, thinking to outwit his shaggy son-in-law, determined to fortify himself so strongly in his castle, that the bear would not be able to get in when he came at the appointed time

to fetch his bride. "Although," said he to himself, "an enchanted bear may have the faculty of reasoning and speaking, he is nevertheless a bear, and must have all the qualities of a natural bear, and must therefore be a very undesirable son-in-law."

Next day, when the Baron related the adventure in the wood to the Baroness and his daughters, Wulfilda fainted away in horror, as soon as she heard she was to be married to a frightful bear; the mother wrung her hands; and the sisters sobbed and wept from fear and sympathy. The Baron, however, went out and surveyed the castle walls and moat, tried the locks and bolts of the iron door, let down the portcullis, and raised the drawbridge. He then mounted to the watch-tower, where he found a secret room under the roof; here he shut up his daughter, who tore her golden hair, and almost wept out her azure eyes.

Six days had passed, and the seventh was dawning, when a loud noise was heard in the direction of the wood, as though an army of savages had been approaching with their war whoops. The whips cracked, the horns blew, the horses pranced, the wheels rattled. A sumptuous stage coach, surrounded by horse-guards, rolled forwards across the lawn towards the castle. All the bolts started back, the gate flew open, the drawbridge fell, and a young prince, fair as the day, stepped out of the coach. He was clad in velvet and satin, round his neck he wore a triple chain of gold, his hat was bound with a string of pearls and dazzling diamonds, and the button that fixed the plume was worth a dukedom. He hurried up the winding staircase, and in a moment the affrighted bride was seen trembling in his arms. The noise aroused the Baron; he opened the

window of his chamber, and saw horses and chariots, knights and horsemen, in the court, and his daughter in the arms of a stranger, who was lifting her into the coach. As the train passed out through the castle gate a pang pierced his heart, and he set up a loud lamentation. "Adieu, my daughter, dear! Farewell, thou Bruin's bride!"

The Baron and Baroness were overpowered at the loss of their daughter; they looked ruefully at each other without speaking. The Baroness would not believe her eyes, and concluded that the carrying away was an unaccountable illusion. She seized the key that opened the secret chamber, but found neither her daughter nor any of her wardrobe. But there lay on the table a silver key, which she took up, and then looking through a lancet window, she saw a cloud of dust arise towards the east, and heard the tumult and shout-

ing of the bridal party until they entered the forest. The Baroness then descended in sorrow from the tower, put on mourning apparel, and wept three live-long days in concert with her

"He found a hundred-weight of gold, all in doubloons."

husband and remaining daughters. On the fourth day the Baron quitted the mourning chamber to breathe a little fresh air, when behold, as he passed through the court, he perceived a strong box of ebony, locked, and very heavy to lift. He readily

guessed the contents; instinctively putting his hand into his pocket he was surprised to find a key which turned the lock, when to his further amazement he found a hundred-weight of gold, all in doubloons, and of one coinage. In his joy at this accession to wealth he forgot his sorrow, and in a few days bought horses and falcons, also fine clothes for his wife and daughters, hired servants, and began to renew his old course of riotous carousals, and which he continued till the last doubloon had made itself wings and flown out of the strong box. He then ran into debt, and when he had exhausted the patience of his creditors, the sheriffs seized upon the castle and sold everything the Baron possessed, except a few domestic articles and an old hawk. The Baroness and her daughters again took charge of the kitchen, while the Baron traversed the fields day after day with

his hawk on his hand, glad to escape the discomforts of his house.

One day he loosed his hawk: and the bird rose high in the air, nor would it return to its master's hand, although he called it back. The Baron followed it in its flight as far as he could over the spacious plain. The bird flew towards the enchanted wood, which the Baron was afraid to enter, and so gave up his old hawk for lost. On a sudden a mighty eagle arose from out of the wood and pursued the hawk, which was no sooner aware of a superior enemy than it turned back to its master for protection. But the eagle darted down like an arrow, seized the Baron's shoulder with one powerful talon, and with the other crushed the unfortunate falcon to death. The affrighted Baron tried to beat off the enraged monster with his spear, and struck and thrust hard at the enemy.

"SEIZED THE BARON'S SHOULDER WITH ONE POWERFUL TALON, AND WITH THE OTHER CRUSHED THE UNFORTUNATE FALCON TO DEATH."—*Page* 12.

But the eagle seized the weapon, broke it like a slender reed in two, and then screamed these words aloud into the Baron's ear:—

"How darest thou, bold intruder, disturb my range of air with thy sport? Thou shalt pay for the outrage with thy life!"

"Gently, good Eagle, gently, I pray you; do not squeeze my shoulder so hard. What have I done to you? My hawk has suffered the punishment of his rashness; satisfy your appetite."

"No, no!" rejoined the Eagle; "to-day I have a longing for human flesh, and thou seemest a fat and dainty morsel."

"Ah! spare me!" cried the Baron, in distress. "Oh! spare me, I pray thee! Ask what you will of me, and your demand shall be satisfied, only spare my life!"

"Good!" resumed the Bird; "I will take thee

at thy word. Thou hast two fair daughters, and I need a wife; promise me Adelheid, and I will let thee go in peace. Her ransom shall be two lumps of gold, each one hundred pounds weight. In seven weeks I will fetch my bride home."

Having said this, he mounted aloft, and disappeared amongst the clouds.

In the hour of distress most things lose their value, and when the father saw the sale of his daughters brought such ample profit, he became content with this singular disposal of his children. He returned quite cheerful to the castle, but took no notice of the adventure, partly to save himself the reproaches of his wife, and partly lest he should make his daughter unhappy before the time of the eagle's coming.

Adelheid was the best spinster in the county; she was, also, a skilful weaver, and had just then

taken from the loom a piece of costly linen, as fine as the finest muslin, and had spread it to bleach on a green grass plat near the castle. Six weeks and six days had passed before the fair spinster had any apprehension of her fate; though her father, who grew somewhat sad at this period, would often relate dreams that renewed the memory of Wulfilda, who at times was quite forgotten. Adelheid had a light and cheerful disposition, and she imagined that parental love produced these gloomy fancies in her father. She tripped nimbly, therefore, to her bleaching-ground, on the day appointed for the arrival of the eagle, and spread out her linen, that it might receive the morning dew.

When she had arranged her bleaching-piece, and was looking around her, she saw a gallant train of knights and squires approaching. As she had not

yet dressed her hair, she crouched behind a clump of sweet-briars, which was now in full bloom, just

"She crouched behind a clump of sweet-briars."

raising her head, so as to see the stately cavalcade.

The finest knight among them, a slender young man, with his visor up, sprung from his horse, and, coming towards the bushes, said in a gentle tone,—

"I come to claim thee, my love! Ah! do not

hide thyself; mount up behind me, thou fair Eagle's bride!"

Adelheid felt very strange as she heard this address. The handsome knight pleased her well, but the words "Eagle's bride" chilled the blood in her veins. She sank down fainting on the grass, and on recovering found herself in the arms of the youthful knight, and on the road to the enchanted wood.

Meanwhile the Baroness, who was keeping breakfast, missed Adelheid, and sent her youngest daughter to see where she lingered. But, as she also did not return, the mother, fearing something amiss, went herself to see why her daughter stayed so long. The Baroness went out, and came not back. The Baron perceived what had happened; his heart beat quickly in his bosom as he walked towards the bleachfield, where the mother and

daughter were still seeking Adelheid, and piteously calling her by name. He joined the cry, though he knew well search and vociferation were equally useless. He chanced to pass by the clump of sweet-briars, and perceived something glitter. Upon closer examination, he discovered two golden eggs, each weighing an hundred pounds.

"He discovered two golden eggs."

He could not conceal his joy but communicated the adventure to the mother, who exclaimed,—

"Thou unnatural monster! thou murderer, and not father! canst thou then sacrifice thy own flesh and blood for filthy gain?"

The Baron, at other times but a poor orator, now made an able defence, pleading in excuse the imminent danger that threatened his life. But the inconsolable mother still uttered the bitterest reproaches, and the Baron, therefore, had recourse to his invariable practice in all conjugal altercations, and observed a profound silence, suffering the lady to proceed until she was tired. Meanwhile he made sure of the brace of eggs, rolling them

"Rolling them gently on before him towards the castle."

gently on before him towards the castle. He then, for the sake of appearances, mourned with his family for three days, being all the while only intent upon renewing his former course of life.

The castle soon became, once more, the scene of profuse revelry, and the rendezvous of gluttons and drunkards. Balls, tournaments, and sumptuous feasts, had each their turn from day to day. The younger daughter, Bertha, shone like a bright particular star in her father's court. It was she who distributed the prizes in the encounters of the knights, and opened the dance every evening with the victor.

The Baron's hospitality and Bertha's beauty attracted the most distinguished knights, and many strove to captivate the heart of the fair heiress; but among so many wooers it was hard to decide, and hence the beautiful Bertha was so long in

making a choice, that the golden eggs (for the Baron had never spared the file and the melting-pot) were brought down to the size of hazel-nuts. The Baron's finances soon dwindled away, and his affairs fell into their former perplexity; the tournaments were discontinued, the knights and squires gradually dispersed, the castle again assumed the appearance of a hermitage, and the reduced household were once more put on potato diet and skim milk.

The Baron again ranged the fields in ill humour, wishing heartily for a new adventure, but met with none, for he was afraid to enter the enchanted forest.

One day, however, he pursued a covey of partridges close to the side of the forest, and though he durst not venture in, he followed the skirt of the wood for some distance, and at last came to a

great pond, connected with a running stream, and which he had never seen before. Within the crystal water he perceived trouts innumerable, and congratulated himself highly on the discovery. The pond had a perfectly unsuspicious aspect, so he hied him home, mended one of his old nets, and the next morning went to the pool side with an intention of making a cast. He luckily found a little boat among the reeds, into which he leaped and rowed himself into the middle of the water, and threw his net. The first cast he caught more trouts than he could carry, and he rowed back to the shore well pleased with his success.

About a stone's throw from the water's edge the boat was suddenly checked, and then became immovable, as though it were aground. The Baron, imagining that he was upon a shallow, laboured

with all his might to get the boat afloat again, but it was all to no purpose. The water at length began to run over on all sides, and yet the boat appeared to rise gradually with the surface of the pool, which now expanded itself into a large lake; the waves began to curl and foam, and the affrighted Baron perceived that he and his boat were resting upon the back of a monstrous fish. After a while the fish suddenly plunged downwards, leaving the boat floating, and then again almost instantly appeared on the surface, opening a pair of tremendous jaws. As he seemed about to close them upon the poor Baron and his boat, the following words were heard to issue from what appeared to be a dusky cavern:—

"Presumptuous man! what art thou doing here? Dost thou dare to murder my subjects?

Thy life this instant shall pay forfeit for thy crime!".

"Presumptuous man! what art thou doing here?"

The Baron, from his former experience in adventures, knew very well by this time how he was to conduct himself upon such occasions. He soon

recovered from his first surprise, and, finding the fish was likely to listen to reason, replied, with great presence of mind,—

"I pray you, do not think of violating the laws of hospitality, nor grudge me a dish of fish out of your pool: my kitchen and cellar are very much at your service, whenever you will do me the honour of a visit."

"Nay, excuse me," said the monster; "we are not yet on such an intimate footing as your words imply. Art thou not acquainted with the right of the stronger to eat up his weaker neighbour? Thou hast been stealing my subjects with a view to swallow them, and therefore I will swallow you this instant!"

The angry fish here stretched his jaws still wider, and seemed intent on swallowing up man and boat at one gulp.

"Ah! spare me! spare my life!" cried the Baron. "I am but a slender breakfast for you; spare my life!"

At this exclamation the fish paused.

"Well, then," said he, "thou hast a daughter; promise to give her to me for my wife, and take thy life in return."

"My daughter," replied the Baron, "is perfectly at your service; there is no refusing her under the present circumstances. Yet you should comply with the custom of the country."

"I possess neither silver nor gold," replied the fish; "but there is at the bottom of this pool an immense store of pearl oysters; therefore you have only to ask."

"Very well," replied the Baron; "three bushels of fine pearls cannot be thought too much for a handsome bride."

"The pearls are thine, and the bride mine!" answered the fish. "In seven months I will take my sweetheart home."

He then lashed the water violently with his tail, and drove the boat on shore.

The Baron carried his trouts home, and had them boiled, and enjoyed the meal with his wife and the beautiful Bertha, who little dreamed how dear it was to cost her.

The moon went on to grow full and wane, and at the sixth change the Baron had nearly forgotten what had happened. But when she approached to a circle the seventh time, he remembered his bargain with the fish, and to avoid being an eye-witness, or rather to avoid the anger of the Baroness, he quitted the castle, and made a short journey into the country.

At the sultry hour of noon, on the day of the full

moon, a stately train of horsemen approached the castle. The surprise of the Baroness at such a cavalcade was great in the extreme, and she was undecided whether she should open the gates, or let down the portcullis. But when a knight she knew well announced himself, she readily admitted him. He had often visited the castle in the days of plenty and festivity, and had entered the lists both in jest and earnest, receiving many a knightly prize from the fair Bertha's hand, and had opened many a dance with her. Since the Baron's misfortunes, however, he had disappeared with the rest of their friends.

The worthy lady expressed her regret to the noble knight and his train, that her poverty prevented her offering them any refreshment. He, however, addressed her kindly, begging only a draught of water from the cool spring which flowed

from a rock in the castle, for he never drank wine, and thence had got the name of the Water-Knight. The beautiful Bertha, at her mother's command, hastened to the spring, filled a pitcher, and drank

"The knight then received the cup."

to the knight out of a horn cup. The knight then received the cup, and, setting it to his mouth at the place where her ruby lips had pressed it, pledged her with respectful homage.

The Baroness meanwhile was much distressed

that she could not offer more to her guest; but suddenly recollecting that she had a ripe water-melon in the garden, she hurried out and brought back the melon, laid it upon an earthen plate, and garnished it with vine-leaves and sweet-smelling flowers. On her return from the garden, however, she found the court-yard silent and empty, not a horse or rider could she see there. In the chamber there was neither knight nor squire. She called out "Bertha," but in vain; she searched the whole house, but no Bertha was there. In the ante-chamber stood three new sacks, which she had not seen in her first alarm; she felt them, and

"Stood three new sacks."

they seemed as if they were full of peas, but her affliction did not permit her to examine them more closely.

She now resigned herself altogether to her distress, and lamented aloud till evening, when her husband returned and found her in this melancholy situation. She could not conceal from him the adventures of the day, although she dreaded his reproaches for admitting a strange knight into the castle. But the Baron affectionately consoled her, and only inquired after the sacks of peas, which he then went out to survey, and brought one and opened it before her. How great was the amazement of the afflicted Baroness at seeing pearls, and nothing but pearls, as large as garden-peas, perfectly round, skilfully bored, and of the first water. She perceived clearly that the lover of her daughter had paid a pearl for every maternal tear which she

had shed, and hence she drew a very favourable conclusion as to his wealth and station, consoling herself with the reflection that this son-in-law was no monster, but a courteous knight; a soothing idea, of which the Baron was careful not to bereave her.

"Merchants who crowded to treat for the costly pearls."

The parents had now, indeed, lost all their beautiful daughters, but they were in possession of inexhaustible treasures. The Baron soon turned part of them into current coin; from morning till night the castle swarmed with merchants who crowded to treat for the costly pearls. The Baron

redeemed his lands, re-established his court, and lived no more as a spendthrift, but as a careful economist, for he had now no other daughter to barter for the means to supply his extravagance. The Baroness, however, could never be comforted for the loss of her daughters: she constantly wore mourning, and seemed always dejected. She hoped for some time that Bertha with the Pearl Knight would return, and whenever a stranger was announced she gave way to the hope that it was her son-in-law. The Baron at last could not continue to deceive her with false hopes, and he disclosed to her that this illustrious son-in-law was no other than a monstrous fish.

"Alas!" sighed the Baroness, "what a miserable mother I am. Have I borne children only that they might become the prey of frightful monsters!

Ah, what avails all earthly property and wealth to a childless mother!

These reflections distressed her so much that she became quite disconsolate, and no visitor could now have proved half so welcome to her as Death.

BOOK THE SECOND.

HOW THE LÀDY OF THE BARON HAS A SON, WHO IS NAMED RINALDO, THE SON OF WONDER. HIS ADVENTURES BEGIN.

ALL the maidens in waiting and about the court were much affected by the sorrow of their lady; they wept and lamented along with her, and at times tried to divert her with music and singing, but her heart was dead to enjoyment. The damsel to whose care her private chamber was committed was distinguished above her fel-

lows for sense and sedateness. Her mistress entertained for her a great regard, for she had a sympathising heart, and her lady's sorrow had drawn many a tear from her eyes. That she might not appear intrusive she had hitherto kept silence, but could no longer resist the internal impulse to propose her advice also.

"Gracious lady," she began, "would you but listen to me, I could suggest to you the means of obtaining consolation."

The Baroness desired her to say on.

"Not far, then," she resumed, "from your residence there dwells a pious hermit in a gloomy cavern of the rock; many a pilgrim has recourse to him in his necessity. Suppose you also were to seek consolation and assistance from the holy man: his prayers will at least restore peace to your bosom."

The Baroness was pleased with the proposal;

she clad herself in a pilgrim's habit, walked to the pious hermit, opened to him her distress, presented a rosary of pearls and begged his blessing, which was so efficacious, that before a year had passed away the Baroness was relieved of her sorrow and affliction by the birth of a fine boy.

"She clad herself in a pilgrim's habit."

Great was the joy of the parents at the arrival of this fair fruit of the autumn of their old age. The whole barony was converted into a scene of exultation, rejoicings, and jubilee, for the birth

of an heir. The father named him Rinaldo, the Son of Wonder.

The boy was beautiful as love himself, and his education was conducted with great care. He grew up the joy of his father and the consolation of his mother, who guarded him as the apple of her eye. Though he was the darling of her heart, she did not lose the memory of her daughters: often as she pressed the little smiling Rinaldo in her arms, a tear would drop upon his cheek, and when the dear boy grew older he would sorrowfully ask, "My good mother, why do you weep?"

Though she carefully suppressed the occasion of her secret sorrow, Rinaldo at last, by a thousand coaxing arts, wound the secret from his mother. She told him the adventures of his three sisters, and he laid up every syllable of the wonderful story in his heart. He felt no other wish but to be

of an age to carry arms, that he might sally forth, seek his sisters in the enchanted forest, and break the spell that held them there.

As soon as he was dubbed knight he asked his father's permission to make a campaign, as he pretended, to Flanders. The Baron was rejoiced at the knightly courage of his son, furnished him with armour and horses, squires and servants to carry his baggage, and dismissed him with his blessing, notwithstanding the mother's unwillingness to consent to his departure.

Scarce had the young knight turned his back upon his native place when he quitted the high road, and full of chivalric courage made his way to the castle near the wood, where he was honourably entertained by his father's vassal. Early in the morning, when everything in the castle was sunk in deep sleep, he saddled his horse, left his train

behind, and galloped to the enchanted forest. The deeper he penetrated into it the thicker it became, and the stony road re-echoed to his horse's hoofs. All around him was waste and wild: the trees seemed, by growing close to one another, to oppose the passage of the young adventurer. He dismounted, and leaving his horse to graze, cut a road through the forest with his sword, climbed up precipices, and slided down chasms. After much toil he arrived at a valley watered by a crystal brook; following the windings of the stream he saw at a distance the entrance to a subterraneous cavern, in the front of which laid something that had the appearance of a human figure. The undaunted youth at the sight quickened his steps, and, peeping between the lofty oaks, perceived a beautiful lady sitting on the grass nursing a little shapeless cub in her lap, while a full-grown

"NURSING A LITTLE SHAPELESS CUB IN HER LAP, WHILE A FULL-GROWN BEAR SPORTED AROUND HER."—*Page* 40.

Bear sported around her, sometimes standing on his hind-legs, dancing and tumbling, by which the lady seemed highly amused, until, being ignorant of the proximity of the stranger, the Bear went his way.

Rinaldo knew, from his mother's description, that the lady was his sister Wulfilda, and he came from his lurking-place in order to make himself known to her. But as soon as she was aware of his presence she gave a loud shriek, threw the young bear into the grass, moved hastily forward towards Rinaldo as he approached, and cried out in a sorrowful voice, and with apparent anxiety :—

"What ill-fated star leads thee into this wood, O noble youth? Here dwells a wild Bear, who devours every human creature that approaches his den. Fly, and save thyself!"

He bowed respectfully before the beautiful

speaker, and answered: "Be not afraid, dear lady. I know this forest and all its dangers, and am come hither to rescue you from the spell which holds you in captivity."

"And who art thou," she asked, "who darest adventure to break this mighty spell, and how canst thou accomplish it?"

"With this arm and by this sword. I am Rinaldo, surnamed the 'Son of Wonder'; my father is the Baron whom this wood has robbed of three fair daughters. Art not thou Wulfilda, his first-born?"

This speech amazed the lady still more, and she regarded her brother with silent admiration. He made use of this pause to identify himself by so many family particulars, that she could no longer doubt that Rinaldo was her brother. She embraced him tenderly, but her knees trembled on

account of the imminent danger that threatened his life. She conducted him into the cavern, and pointed out an inner cavern where he could conceal himself. In the outer cave lay a heap of moss, which served the bear and his cub to lie upon; opposite stood a sumptuous bed, with hangings of red damask for the lady.

Scarcely had the adventurous Rinaldo got into his place of refuge when the dreadful bear came growling into the cavern, and snuffed all round with his snout. He had winded the noble steed belonging to the knight, and just devoured him. Wulfilda sat upon her state bed as uneasy as if she had been upon burning coals. Her heart was oppressed and faint, for she perceived that her bearish lord and master was in a bad humour, probably being aware of the stranger in his den. She did not cease caressing him, she stroked his

back gently down, and rubbed his ears with her velvet hand; but the intractable Bear paid small attention to her caresses.

"Leave me, I desire, or dread my anger!"

"I smell human flesh," murmured the ravenous creature from his capacious throat.

"My dear Bear," replied the lady, "thou art mistaken; how is it possible that a human being would venture into this dreary desert?"

"I scent human flesh," repeated the Bear, and peeped about the bed of his spouse.

The young knight, who overheard what was said, felt a cold sweat, in spite of his courage, break out on his forehead. Her brother's danger, however, made the lady bold and resolute.

"Dear Bear," said she, "you begin to grow troublesome, and I beg of you to leave me. Leave me, I desire, or dread my anger!"

The Bear, however, disregarded her threat, and went on snuffing about the hangings of the bed. Nevertheless, Bear as he was, he was still under subjection to his wife; and at last Wulfilda took courage, and gave him such a thrust in the loins that he crept away with great humility to his straw, and lying down, began, after the manner of his kind, to suck his paws and lick his cub, growling all the time. Soon after he fell asleep, and

snored as only a bear can snore. Hearing this, the tender sister refreshed her brother with a cup of clear water and some fruit, desiring him to be of good cheer, for now the chief danger was over.

Rinaldo was so weary from his adventure, that he fell into a deep sleep, and snored as loud as if he had been snoring with his brother-in-law for a wager. On awaking next morning, he found himself in a gorgeous bed of state; his chamber was hung with silken tapestry; near the bed lay his clothes and armour; and on a stool, covered with velvet, there was a silver bell to summon the servants. Rinaldo had no idea how he had been translated out of a dreary cavern into a sumptuous palace, and was in doubt whether he was now dreaming, or had dreamed before of the adventure in the wood. To solve the difficulty he rung the bell. A servant in splendid

livery came to inquire what he would please to have, and mentioned that his sister Wulfilda, and Albert the Bear, were expecting him with impatience.

The young Baron was more and more overwhelmed with astonishment, and, dressing himself quickly, he went into the antechamber, where he found noble pages, valets, and livery servants in waiting, and then proceeded, through a series of state chambers, to the audience-room, where his sister received him with the dignity of a princess. She had beside her a noble-looking youth, about seventeen years old, and a charming girl, some year or so younger. A moment afterwards came in Albert the Bear, who had now cast off his frightful shaggy appearance, as well as the attributes of a bear, and assumed the form of the most amiable prince in the world. Wulfilda presented her

brother, and Albert embraced his relation with all the warmth of friendship and brotherly love. Wulfilda then informed her brother that the prince her husband, with all his subjects, had been enchanted for so many days by the malicious sorcerer of the wood. Once every week, from the dawn of one day to the next, he was released from his enchantment; but as soon as the silver stars in the firmament began to fade, the castle then changed into a craggy rock, the charming park around into a dreary desert, the springs and cascades into stagnant unwholesome pools, the prince himself into a shaggy bear, the knights and squires into badgers and polecats, whilst the maids of honour took the shape of owls and bats, moaning and shrieking all the day long.

It was on a day of disenchantment, and not, as it happens in common life, of enchantment, that

Albert carried home his bride. The fair Wulfilda, who had for six days wept over her fate in being married to a shaggy bear, laid aside her sorrows at finding herself, on the seventh, wife of a handsome and youthful prince, who embraced her with much affection, and led her into a glorious palace, where a splendid bridal procession awaited her. She was received by beautiful damsels, crowned with garlands of myrtle, singing and playing, and clad in splendid robes. Though she was far from vain, yet she could but feel some secret exultation. A sumptuous feast succeeded the marriage ceremony, and a ball closed the solemnities of the festive day.

In the morning the bride awoke, but what was her surprise when she found no husband by her side, and, on drawing the curtain, saw herself transported into a dusky vault, where the day gave

her only light enough to perceive a frightful bear, looking ruefully towards her from a dark corner. She sunk back upon the bed, and swooned away in affright. After a long interval she came to herself, and in her distress uttered a loud scream, which the shrill voices of a hundred owls returned from without. The sympathising Bear could not endure to be a spectator of her alarm and distress, so, with a heavy heart, he left his lair, and went out into the wood, whence he did not return till the seventh day, the day before his transmutation. The six intervening days seemed years to the unhappy lady.

"Looking ruefully towards her."

In the bridal festivity, it had been forgotten to provide the apartments of the bride with provisions and refreshments, for the charm had not power over inanimate things immediately in contact with the fair Wulfilda. For the first two days

"She gathered some berries and acorns."

Wulfilda had not cared to eat or drink; but at last nature demanded support, and she went out in search of sustenance, as no food of any kind could be found in the cavern. She took a little water in the hollow of her hand from the brook

that murmured by, and refreshed her parched and burning lips. She gathered some berries and acorns; she brought them into the cavern almost by instinct, as she longed far more ardently to die than to live.

With this wish in her heart, she went to sleep on the sixth day, and awoke early in the morning in the very chamber she had entered on her bridal night. She found everything just as she had left it, and by her side the most beautiful and handsome of husbands, who testified in the most touching manner his sorrow for her sad situation, to which his irresistible passion had reduced her, and with tears in his eyes begged for her forgiveness. He explained to her the nature of the spell —how every seventh day destroyed its power, and restored everything to its natural form. Wulfilda was touched by the tenderness of her husband;

she considered that her married lot might still be happy, as every seventh day was to be a bright one, and the happiest marriage was sure to have its clouds. She therefore resigned herself to her fate, and made her Albert the happiest Bear under the sun.

The happy day of disenchantment passed but too rapidly. After dinner the courtiers walked with the ladies in the park, and amused themselves with sports and gallantry, till the trumpet sounded for supper, which was served in a gallery surrounded by mirrors, and illuminated by innumerable wax-lights. The company ate, drank, and were merry until midnight, and then Albert whispered in his wife's ear, who thereupon took her brother on one side, and, in a mournful voice, thus addressed him,—

"My dear brother, we must part; the hour of

change is at hand, when this beautiful palace will vanish. Albert is concerned for thee; he fears for thy life. He will not be able to resist the brutal instinct of his bearish nature, which will prompt him to devour thee, shouldst thou here await the approaching change. Leave, then, this dreadful forest, and never more return to us!"

"No, my dear sister!" replied Rinaldo; "I cannot leave you! To seek thee, my sister, was the purpose for which I left our home; and, now I have found thee, never will I leave this wood without thee! Tell me how I can dissolve this wicked spell?"

Albert having heard this resolve of his brother-in-law, pressed him with so much earnestness to desist from his purpose, that at last, in compliance with the request of his brother, and the tears and entreaties of his sister, Rinaldo prepared for his

departure. Albert affectionately embraced the valiant youth, and when he had kissed his sister, and was on the eve of departing, Albert took from his bosom three bear's bristles, and presented them to the young knight.

"Three bear's bristles, and presented them."

"Do not despise these trifles. Should you ever be in distress and want assistance, rub these bristles between your hands and await the consequences."

In the court stood a noble horse, with a number of mounted attendants. "Adieu, my brother," cried Albert the Bear; "hasten to be gone, I implore you."

"Adieu, my brother," returned Rinaldo, the Son

of Wonder, and the horses' hoofs rattled over the drawbridge.

The golden stars still twinkled bright in the heavens, the cavalcade proceeded at full speed over the stocks and stones, up hill and down, through woods and wildernesses, meadows and fields. After a good hour's riding the sky began to turn grey, and on a sudden all the torches went out. Rinaldo found himself roughly thrown to the ground, and knew not how it happened; the whole cavalcade had vanished, but he perceived a number of glow-worms hurry away to the enchanted wood. The undaunted knight now could easily explain the adventure, and waited patiently for sun-rise; and as he was still within the enchanted precincts, he determined to seek for his two younger sisters, although he might not succeed in breaking the spells which he believed held them also in thrall.

For three days he wandered to no purpose about the thicket, nor did any adventure fall in his way. He had just consumed the last remains of a cake brought from the table of his brother Albert the Bear, when he heard something rustle high over his head in the air, just like a ship in full sail cutting through the waves. He looked up and perceived a mighty eagle descending into its nest, which was built on the side of a rugged rock. Rinaldo was rejoiced at this discovery; he concealed himself in the brushwood, and watched till the eagle should take wing again. In seven hours the bird quitted the nest, and then Rinaldo quitted his hiding-place and called out, "Adelheid, my beloved sister, if thou dwellest on this rock answer me, I pray. I am thy brother Rinaldo, the Son of Wonder. I am seeking thee, in hopes of breaking the wicked spell that hath power over thee."

"A silken rope-ladder descended."

When he had done speaking, a soft female voice from above, as if from the clouds, replied: "If thou art Rinaldo, the Son of Wonder, thou art welcome to thy sister Adelheid. Make haste hither, climb up, and embrace the solitary mourner."

Rejoiced at this kind invitation, the knight attempted to climb the rock; but in vain. As he

was anxiously meditating on the means of ascending, a silken rope-ladder descended, by the help of which he soon reached the eyry of the Eagle, which he found was spacious and firmly built. His sister was seated under a canopy, covered against the weather with waxed cloth, and lined within with rose-coloured satin. The meeting on both sides was very tender; as Adelheid had an exact acquaintance with her father's family affairs, she knew that Rinaldo had been born after she was carried away.

Edgar the Eagle, her husband, was enchanted by weeks: every seventh week he was free from the power of the spell. In this interval he had often in disguise visited the court of his father-in-law, and brought intelligence from time to time of the Baron and his family. Adelheid invited her brother to stay until the next change, to which he

willingly consented, though the term was now six weeks. She concealed him in the hollow of the rock, and fed him daily with coarse food, always leaving him with this admonition :—

"As thou valuest thy life, keep from Edgar's eagle-eye. Should he see thee, thou art lost ; he will tear out thy eyes, and eat thy heart, as he yesterday served three of thy squires."

Rinaldo shuddered when he heard the fate of his servants, and promised to take good care of himself; and thus continued to abide in the hollow rock for six long and tedious weeks. He enjoyed, however, the satisfaction of chatting with his sister whenever the Eagle took his flight abroad.

He was abundantly recompensed for his trial of patience by seven joyous days ; as he was received with as much cordiality by his brother the Eagle,

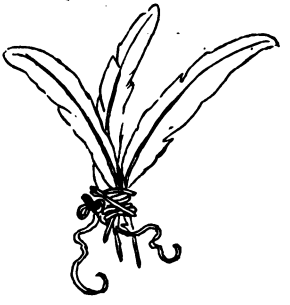
as he had before been by his brother the Bear. Edgar's castle, court, and all accessories, were just the same as those he had quitted; every day was a festival, and the time of the fatal change came on but too quickly. On the evening of the seventh day Edgar dismissed his guest with the tenderest embraces, but warned him at the same time not to come near his chace.

"Shall I," said Rinaldo, sorrowfully, "part from you for ever, my dear friends? Is it impossible to burst the fatal spell which holds you here in captivity? Had I a hundred lives to lose, I would risk them all to redeem you."

Edgar affectionately pressed his hand. "Thanks, generous youth, for your love and devotion, but abandon the rash attempt; it is indeed possible to break our enchantment, but you must not, shall not, attempt to do so. Whoever makes the trial

in vain, loses his life, and you shall not be sacrificed for us."

Rinaldo's youthful courage was but the more incited to attempt the adventure; his eyes sparkled with eagerness, a ray of sanguine hope brightened his face. He pressed his brother Edgar to reveal the secret, and instruct him how to dissolve the spell; but Edgar refused to gratify him, for fear of exposing the life of the gallant youth.



"Three eagle's plumes."

"All I dare say is, that you must find the key of the charm, if you are to succeed in breaking it. If you are fated to be our deliverer, the stars will show you the way to find it; if not, your attempt would be folly."

On this he drew out of his bosom three eagle's plumes, and gave them as a token of remembrance to the knight; telling him, that whenever he was in distress, he was to rub them between his fingers and await the consequences.

They then took a friendly leave, Edgar's seneschal and courtiers attending Rinaldo through a long walk, planted with pines and yews, as far as the bounds of the chace; and when he had crossed them his attendants hastily shut a huge door, and were seen no more.

Rinaldo sorrowfully seated himself under a large oak; the full moon shone bright and clear, and he yet saw the turrets of his sister's castle rising above the lofty trees. At dawn he was enveloped in a thick mist, and as soon as this had been dispersed by the rising sun, castle, park, and huge door had all vanished; and he found himself in a dreary desert on the edge of a precipice, from which he

looked down into a dark abyss. The young knight searched around for a way to depart, and discerning afar off a lake whose unruffled surface was sparkling with the reflection of the sun, he made for it; but as he walked on, wild bushes and lofty trees sprung up on every side, and the lake vanished before his eyes. Towards sunset, however, he again saw the surface of the water glimmering through the trees, and the underwood grew thinner; yet he could not reach the shore before the fall of night. He laid down under a forest tree, and did not awake until the sun stood high in the heavens. He found himself refreshed by sleep, and his limbs restored to their full vigour; and springing nimbly up he walked along the shore, devising how to obtain an interview with his sister, who he now felt assured inhabited the lake. In vain he raised his voice and called to her:—

"Bertha, dear sister, if thou dwellest in this pool, answer me. I am Rinaldo, surnamed the Son of Wonder. I am seeking thee, to break the spell, and redeem thee from thy watery prison."

He received no answer, except from the surrounding echoes. "My dear fishes," he proceeded, as shoals of spotted trout swam to the margin of the lake, and seemed to gaze at the young stranger, "say to your mistress that her brother is waiting for her on the shore."

But Rinaldo perceived that he was pleading to the fishes in vain. As an accomplished knight he was expert in all exercises; he could swim like a water-rat, therefore he doffed his armour, but his bright sword he kept in his hand; and without removing his undercoat of quilted silk, plunged boldly into the waves in search of his sister Bertha. "Her husband," he thought, "will

not swallow me up directly, but say a civil word first, as he did by my father."

He pursued his watery way without meeting any adventure; but as he began to tire he looked towards the shore, and saw a thin mist ascend near him, and which seemed to rise from a large mass of ice. He swam with all his might to take a nearer view of the phenomenon; and a pillar of mountain crystal projected out of the water, seemingly hollow, as there arose out of it a refreshing balsamic scent, with little curls of vapour, which the breeze spread over the surface of the water. The adventurous swimmer conjectured that this might be the entrance of the subterraneous dwelling of his sister; he therefore ventured down it. It led direct into the chamber of the beautiful Bertha, who was just then employed in boiling her chocolate over a little fire of sandal-

wood. On hearing the noise, and seeing a strange knight enter her chamber, she overturned the chocolate in affright, and then fainted away; but

"She overturned the chocolate in affright."

Rinaldo shook her gently until she came to herself. When a little recovered, she said, in a low tone:—

"Unfortunate man! whoever thou art, how darest thou attempt to enter this subterranean

abode? Art thou ignorant that this audacity will cost thee thy life?"

"Fear nothing, my dear," replied the dauntless knight. "I am thy brother. Rinaldo, surnamed the Son of Wonder, who willingly braves danger or death to rescue his beloved sister from the wicked spell in which she is bound."

Bertha tenderly embraced her brother, her delicate frame trembling all the while. The Dolphin, Ufo, her husband, had also visited her father's court at different times unknown; and he knew that Rinaldo had gone in quest of his sisters. He had often lamented the rash undertaking of the young man; "For," said he, "if brother Bear should not devour him, or brother Eagle not pick out his eyes, yet I, the Dolphin, may not be able to resist swallowing him. And shouldst thou, my dear, even clasp him in thy arms to protect him, I

should dash thy crystal dwelling to pieces, so that the waters would rush in and drown thee."

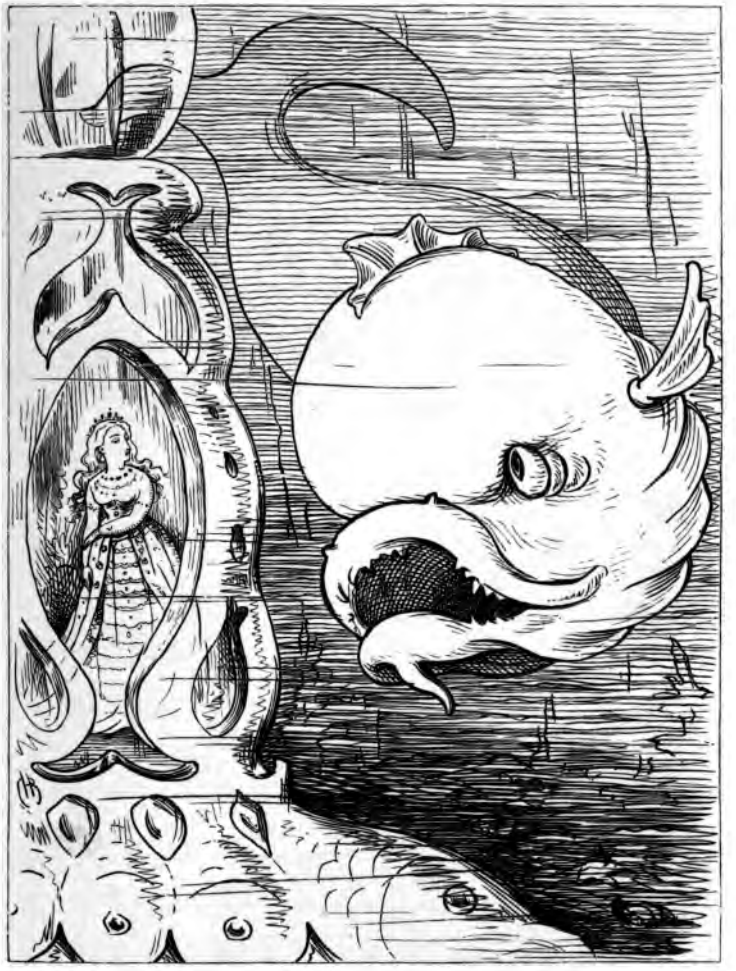
The beautiful Bertha repeated all this to her brother, but he replied, "Canst not thou hide me from the monster as thy sisters did, that I may remain here until the cessation of the enchantment?"

"Alas!" replied she, "how can I hide thee? See'st thou not that this habitation is of crystal, so that its walls are as transparent as glass?"

At last, however, she remembered that there was a pile of wood, and Rinaldo cheerfully accepted this place of refuge, which his sister arranged as a beaver constructs his subterraneous lodgings. When Rinaldo was concealed, Bertha repaired to her toilet, set herself off as handsomely as possible, selecting the gown she thought best calculated to display her elegant shape, and then proceeded to the presence-chamber.

Now, during the period of enchantment, Ufo the Dolphin could enjoy the society of his amiable spouse no further than by making her a visit daily; looking from without into the crystal house, and feeding upon the sight of her beauty Scarce had the charming Bertha taken her station, when the enormous fish came swimming towards her; the water was heard to roar from afar, and the waves curled in circles round the crystal palace.

The monster rested without, before the chamber, drawing in streams of water and spouting them out again from his capacious nostrils, gazing all the while in silent admiration with his wide sea-green eyes upon his beauteous wife. However much Bertha strove to affect an air of unconcern, she was not able to hide her anxiety; hypocrisy and cunning were quite foreign to her; her heart fluttered



"GAZING ALL THE WHILE IN SILENT ADMIRATION WITH HIS WIDE SEA-GREEN EYES UPON HIS BEAUTEOUS WIFE."—*Page* 70.

and beat, her bosom heaved, her cheeks would glow and suddenly turn pale again. The Dolphin, for all his gross fishy nature, had still so much physiognomical perception, that he concluded from these signs there was some foul play, and he made angry questions, shooting away like an arrow, and encircling the place, raising such a disturbance in the waters that the crystal dwelling trembled throughout, and the terrified Bertha believed that he would dash it to pieces. The excited Dolphin could not, however, discover anything, and he became gradually more quiet. Luckily his motions had so muddied the water that he could not perceive the alarm of the anxious Bertha, so he swam away.

Rinaldo kept quite still among the wood till the time of transformation; and although to all appearance brother Dolphin had dismissed his

suspicions, he never failed at his daily visit to swim thrice round the crystal dwelling, although he never behaved so outrageously as at first.

The hour of change at length delivered the patient prisoner from his uncomfortable concealment. One morning when he awoke he found himself in a royal palace situated on a small island. Buildings, pleasure-grounds, market-places, everything in short seemed to float on the water. A hundred gilded barges passed and re-passed each other, and the castle of brother Dolphin was reflected as in a mirror. The reception of the young knight was just as friendly here as at the two former courts. Ufo was enchanted by months—every seventh month the spell ceased: from one full moon to the next, all things went on in their natural train. As Rinaldo's residence here was longer, he became better acquainted with his

brother Ufo, and contracted a warm friendship with him.

Rinaldo's curiosity to know how the three princes had been reduced to the unnatural state of enchantment had been long painful to him; he, therefore, inquired eagerly of his sister Bertha, but she could give him no satisfaction on the point, and Ufo preserved a mysterious silence. Rinaldo, therefore, could not gratify his curiosity. Meanwhile the days of disenchantment hurried swiftly away; the moon lost her silvery horns, and acquired a rounder shape, which foretold her wane. During an evening walk, Ufo gave his brother-in-law Rinaldo to understand that the time of separation would arrive in a few hours: he recommended him earnestly to return to his parents, who were in great affliction upon his account: his mother had been inconsolable ever since it was known that he

had not gone to Flanders, but to the enchanted forest, in quest of adventures.

Rinaldo made no reply to Ufo's entreaties, but asked if the wood contained other adventures, and learned that there was only one more, of which he had heard already—to seek the key of the enchantments, and destroy the powerful talisman; for as long as the spell was in force there was no deliverance to be hoped for by the princes.

"But," added Ufo, solemnly, "follow good counsel, my dear brother; be satisfied with what you have already achieved; depart, and acquaint your parents with all you have seen and heard. Rescue, by your return, your good mother from the sorrow which oppresses her on your account."

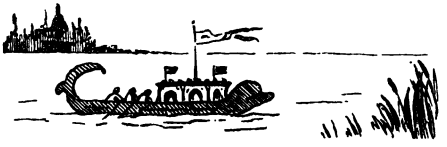
Rinaldo appeared to listen to his brother's advice, but he had resolved to continue his adventures.

Ufo easily discerned on what Rinaldo's mind

was bent. He, therefore, took out of a pouch three fish-scales, saying :—

"When hereafter you may want help, rub these quickly in your hand until they become warm, and await the consequence."

Rinaldo then took his leave, and, embarking in a gilded barge, was rowed to land by four liveried



"Embarking in a gilded barge, was rowed to land."

boatmen. He was scarcely ashore, when the castle, gardens, and buildings disappeared: and of all this glory there remained but a fish-pond, surrounded by tall reeds, which were shaken by the chilly morning breeze. The knight found himself

upon the spot where, some months before, he had plunged in the water; his shield and armour lay still where he had left them. Pressing the cross handle of his sword to his lips, he vowed never to rest till he had possessed himself of the key of the spell which bound his kindred.

BOOK THE THIRD.

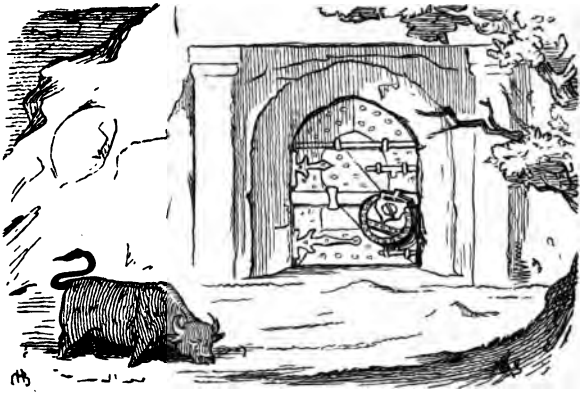
RINALDO, THE SON OF WONDER, CONTINUES HIS ADVENTURES IN SEARCH OF THE SPELL WHICH ENCHANTS HIS KINDRED.

"WHO shall guide my footsteps to the path that leads to the most wonderful of adventures in the enchanted forest? Ye beneficent powers, look down propitious! and if a son of earth may break the mighty spell, O! let me be the fortunate mortal!"

Thus exclaimed Rinaldo, as he pursued, in deep thought, the path far into the wood. For seven long days he roamed, without fear or apprehension, through the endless windings; seven nights he slept under the canopy of heaven, so that his bright armour was rusted by the dews. On the eighth day he advanced to the edge of a projecting rock, whence he could look down into the inhospitable defiles. Sideways there opened a vale, covered with evergreen creepers, and enclosed by rocks of granite, over which waved the melancholy cypress.

In the distance he thought he could perceive a monument of human design and construction. Two gigantic pillars of marble, with capitals and pedestals of brass, supported a huge ebony beam, which rested against a precipice, overshadowing a steel door, secured with strong bolts and bars. Near the portal was feeding a black bull, whose

watchful sparkling eyes seemed to indicate that he had charge of the entrance. Rinaldo doubted not



"Near the portal was feeding a black bull."

that he had found the adventure mentioned by his brother, Ulf the Dolphin, and immediately resolved to attempt it. Down he clambered from the ridge of the rocks into the vale. He had approached within an arrow-shot before the bull

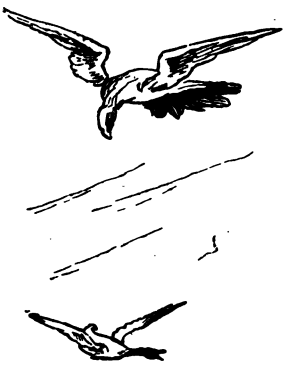
observed him; but, now that he did so, he sprang up fiercely, galloped in great fury around, like an Andalusian bull preparing to encounter the Torreador, and snuffed against the ground, so that great clouds of dust arose; he stamped till the earth shook; and then, striking the rocks with his head and horns, shivered the hard stone into fragments. The knight threw himself into an attitude of defence, and, as the bull ran at him, he avoided his deadly horns by a quick turn, giving the neck of the beast so violent a blow with his sword, that he thought he must have severed the head from the trunk; but, alas, the neck of the bull was invulnerable to steel or iron; the sword was shivered into a thousand pieces, and the knight retained only the hilt in his hand. He had now nothing to defend himself with but a spear of ash, armed with a two-edged point of steel; but this also broke

upon the second assault, like a blade of straw. The bull caught the defenceless youth upon his horns, and tossed him aloft in the air, waiting to gore him as he fell, or to trample him under his feet. Happily Rinaldo caught between the spreading branches of a tree, which, holding him, rescued him from death. Although every bone in his body seemed to have suffered, he retained sufficient presence of mind to hold fast by the tree; for the raging bull butted so violently against the stem with his brazen front, that the roots were loosened, and the tree nodded to his fall.

As the infuriated beast turned back to charge again, Rinaldo bethought himself of the presents of his brothers. Accident brought to his hand the packet of the three bear's bristles: he rubbed them violently together, when instantly there came trotting along a powerful bear, and began a fierce

contest with the bull. The bear soon prevailed, laid the bull on his back, and tore him to pieces.

Whilst this dismemberment proceeded, a duck flew out from the interior of the dead bull, and flew away, screaming loudly. Rinaldo guessed that the duck mocked the victory attained by the bear, and carried away the magic spell; he therefore took out instantly the three plumes, and rubbed them between his hands. On this a mighty Eagle appeared high in the air; and the wily duck instantly alighted, squatting close among the bushes, the Eagle hovering at an immense height above. The knight,



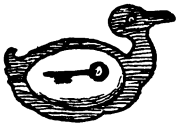
"A mighty Eagle appeared."

observing this, endeavoured to rouse the duck, and pursued it until the undergrowth was thinner, and, as it could no longer conceal itself, it arose, and directed its flight towards the pool, but the eagle, darting down, seized and tore it to pieces with its mighty talons. In dying, the duck dropped a golden egg into the pool.

"A large fish appeared above the waves."

Rinaldo knew at once how to meet this new difficulty. He instantly rubbed the scales between his hands, and a large fish appeared above the waves. The fish, which had caught the egg in his

capacious jaws, now threw it on shore. At this Rinaldo jumped for joy; he struck the golden egg with a stone, it parted in two, and a little key fell out, which he recognised in triumph as the key of the enchantment. He now hurried back to the steel portal. The dwarf key seemed little suited to the giant padlock; however, he did not hesitate to try it, and scarce had it touched the lock when it was loosened, the ponderous iron bars drew back of their own accord, and the steel portal unclosed.



The enchanted key.

He quickly descended into the dusky cavern which presented itself. Seven doors led to seven subterraneous apartments, all sumptuously furnished and gloriously illuminated with many-coloured lights.

Rinaldo, having traversed them all, came at

last to a closet, where he beheld a young lady lying on a sofa in a magic sleep. He strove to awake her, but, alas, he could not. This affecting spectacle at once created in his heart the sensation of love, and he stood gazing at her without being capable of word or motion.

When Rinaldo had a little recovered himself, he looked round, and saw, right opposite the sleeping beauty, an alabaster table, on which was engraven a number of unknown characters. He guessed that the talisman which directed the spells of the enchanted wood was engraved upon this table, and in the indignation of the moment, he clenched his fist, armed as it was with an iron glove, and struck with all his force upon the table. Immediately the beautiful sleeper awoke, and having cast an affrighted look towards the table, fell back again into a profound sleep.

Rinaldo, repeated the blow, and the lady started as before. He now determined to destroy the talisman, and, seizing the magic table with great effort, he succeeded in throwing it from its lofty pedestal down on the marble floor, so that it flew into a thousand pieces. Instantly the young lady awaked from her enchantment, and for the first time was aware of the presence of the knight, who had—the ladies will do justice to his gallantry—fallen down before her on his knees. Before he could speak, she covered her beautiful face with her veil, and said in great anger,—

"Away from me, abominable sorcerer! even in the form of the most beautiful of youths, thou shalt not deceive my eyes, nor surprise my heart. Thou knowest my resolution; consign me again to the sleep of death, in which thy sorcery had thrown me!"

As Rinaldo was at no loss to understand the cause of the lady's mistake, he was not, therefore, disconcerted at this address, but answered thus,—

"Charming lady, be not angry! I am not the abhorred sorcerer who would detain you here in captivity. I am Rinaldo, surnamed the Son of Wonder. Look up! Behold! the spell which overpowered your senses is no more!"

The lady cautiously drew aside her veil, and, seeing the alabaster table actually demolished, could not conceal her wonder and thankfulness at the daring of the young adventurer. Looking kindly upon him, she raised him up, and holding out her hand of pearly whiteness, she said,—

"If it be as you say, accomplish your work, valiant knight, and lead me from this frightful cavern, that I may behold the glorious light of the

sun, if it be day, or else the silver moon and golden stars, if it be night!"

Rinaldo then conducted her through the seven state chambers, which he had passed on entering. He opened the last door, but without was the blackest darkness. Rinaldo and his lovely companion were a long time before they could find their way out of the labyrinthine passages, or perceive the faintest gleam of day through the distant entrance of the shapeless cavern.

At last they found egress into the open air, and the disenchanted lady joyously inhaled the scented gale, which the mild zephyrs bore from the blooming fields. She sat herself down on the grass, by the side of her deliverer, who had already conceived for her an ardent love, as she was fair as Venus.

Yet another passion disquieted him: this was curiosity to learn who the fair unknown might

be, and how she came to be enchanted in this forest. He asked her modestly to give him information on these points, when she opened her rosy mouth and said,—

"I am Hildegard, daughter of Radvow, Prince of Pomerania; Zornebock, chief of the Serbians, asked me from my father in marriage, but, as he was a heathen, and a reputed magician, he was refused under pretext of my tender years. This rejection enraged him so much, that he made war against my father, slew him in battle, and became master of his territories. I had flown for refuge to my aunt, the Countess of Vohburg, as my three brothers, all gallant knights, were abroad in quest of adventure. My place of refuge could not be concealed from the sorcerer, who, as soon as he had taken possession of my father's domains, re-

solved to carry me away, which he could easily do by virtue of his magic art.

"The Count, my uncle, was a great lover of hunting; I often accompanied him, and on such occasions all the knights of the court strove who should offer me the best accoutred horse. One day an unknown squire pressed forward with a fine dapple grey, requesting me in his master's name to mount, and consider the horse as my own. I asked him for his knight's name, but he excused himself from answering this question, until I had tried the animal, and should declare on my return that I did not despise the present. I could not well refuse the offer; the steed was so sumptuously caparisoned that he attracted the eyes of the whole court: gold, and jewels, and fine embroidery were lavished on the purple saddle-cloth; a rein of red silk was attached to a silver bit; the stirrup was of

native gold, thick beset with rubies. I vaulted into the saddle, and was vain enough to be pleased with myself.

"The pace of the noble animal was so light and easy, that he scarce seemed to touch the ground with his hoofs. He bounded lightly over hedge and ditch, and down precipitous banks, where the boldest knights dared not follow me. A milk-white hind, which sprang up before me, drew me in pursuit deep into the wood, and I was separated from the rest of the hunters.

"Fearful of losing myself, I quitted the stag, intending to return to my companions; but the horse refused to obey my guidance. He reared, snorted, shook his mane, and became quite unmanageable. I tried to soothe him, but in an instant the dapple grey steed changed into a winged monster. The fore-feet spread into a pair

of wings, a broad bill stretched itself out from the head, his dappled coat becoming scales of brass.

"And after an hour's flight high above the clouds."

He mounted into the air, and, after an hour's flight high above the clouds, descended in this forest, before the iron gate of a castle.

"My first terror, from which I have not yet

recovered, increased as soon as I saw the esquire that had presented the dapple grey in the morning, and who now respectfully offered to help me down from the dragon's back. Overpowered by horror and fear, I descended by his help, and I suffered myself to be conducted through a long suite of state chambers to a company of ladies dressed as for a gala, and by whom I was welcomed as their sovereign lady. All were eager to receive my commands, and to execute them.

"Astonished at what I saw and heard, I asked where I was, or why they offered me homage, but no one would answer me. I resigned myself to a silent sorrow, which was interrupted after some time by Zornebock the sorcerer, in the form of a yellow gipsy, casting himself at my feet and soliciting my affections.

"I received as I should have received the mur-

derer of my father. The tyrant became outrageous at the scorn I displayed; I defied his fury, however, and challenged him to fulfil his threats to crush the palace to pieces, and bury me under the ruins; but the monster suddenly left me, saying he would give me time to reflect.

"In seven days he renewed his odious proposals. I turned from him with contempt, and he rushed furiously out of the apartment. Soon afterwards the earth trembled under my feet, and the castle seemed to be falling into an abyss. I sank back on my couch, and my senses left me. After a time the sorcerer's dreadful voice roused me out of what I imagined had been a swoon, but which I found to have been a deep sleep.

"'Awake,' said he, 'lovely sleeper, out of thy seven years' slumber! Tell me if the soothing hand of time has lessened thy aversion towards thy

faithful knight? Cheer my heart with the faintest ray of hope, and this melancholy cavern shall change into a temple of joy!'

"I deigned not either to answer or to look at the base magician, but covered my face with my veil and wept. My affliction seemed to move him; he mourned aloud, and knelt down at my feet. At length his patience was wearied, he sprang hastily up, exclaiming, 'Well, so be it, then; in seven years more we will speak together again.'

"He then reared the alabaster table on its pedestal; an irresistible sleep weighed down my eyelids, till the cruel tyrant broke my repose anew.

"'Insensible as thou art towards me, think of thy brothers' fate; my faithless esquire disclosed thy fate to them, but the traitor is punished. They came, rash youths, with a host of retainers to rescue thee, but this arm proved too mighty for them,

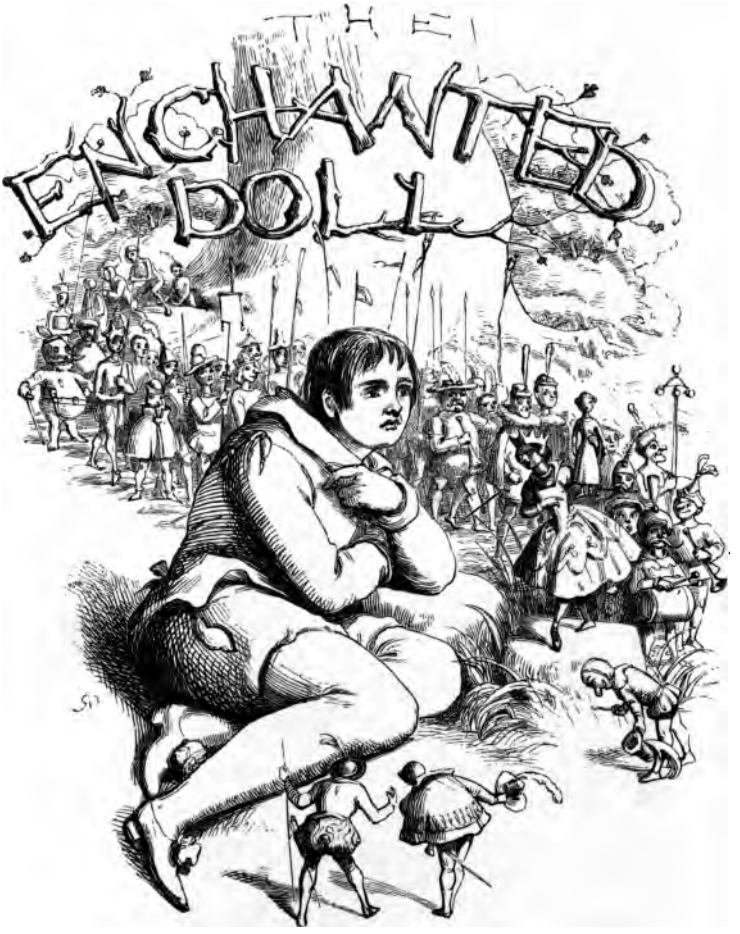
and they are suffering for their rashness under various forms in this enchanted forest.'

"This was a paltry falsehood, to which the sorcerer had recourse in order to overcome my firmness, but it only embittered my heart yet more against him; and I did not strive to conceal the scorn and the contempt I had for him.

"'Unhappy woman,' he said after a time, 'thy fate is decided. Sleep on till the invisible powers cease to obey this talisman.' He instantly reared the alabaster table upright, and the magic slumber deprived me of life and sensation. It is you, noble knight, who have rescued me from this sleep of death by destroying the enchanter's spell. Yet how you have accomplished this deed I know not. Zornebock can be no longer alive, otherwise you could not with impunity have destroyed his talisman."

The charming Hildegard had judged rightly. The sorcerer had marched with an army of his subjects upon Bohemia, where Libuffa, a princess of a fairy race, then reigned. In her he found his match; Zornebock, in comparison with the celebrated Bohemian queen, was but a novice in magic. She confounded him so by her spells that he was forced to relinquish the field of battle; and he fell under the lance of a stout knight, to whom she had given magic weapons which her enemy could not resist.

As soon as the fair Hildegard ceased speaking, Rinaldo took up the discourse, and related his own adventures. When he mentioned his brothers-in-law, the three enchanted princes in the wood, she was seized with great surprise, for she now perceived that Zornebock's account was no falsehood. The knight was on the point of ending his story,



Illustrated by Richard Doyle.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

JACOB POUT'S FIRST INTERVIEW WITH THE BLACK FAIRY.

RATHER more than a hundred years ago happened the story I am about to tell. It was long before the railroads had cut up the dancing-grounds of the

Fairies, or the shrill whistle of the locomotive had frightened the "good people" from the green dells and quiet nooks wherein they are said to have held their merry-makings by the clear moonlight. We never see a fairy now-a-days: nevertheless we are glad to talk about them and their doings in the old time! What a pretty sight it must have been to have seen King Oberon's state balls! Let us imagine one of those elfin revels.

"Mushroom throne."

There Oberon sits upon his pretty little mushroom throne, under a canopy of feathery fern, while tiny gnats hum merry tunes within the bells of the fox-glove and wild convolvulus. See! how his minikin courtiers dance round and round until

the grass shows a circle of the deepest green! How gracefully their robes of film float in the air or twine about their fragile limbs! And now, tired with their sport, they throw themselves at the root of some huge field-flower, and drink bright dew from cups gathered from the yellow cowslip, and tell of the mad pranks they have played poor mortals, like Shakspere's *Puck*,—

> "That shrewd and knavish sprite
> Call'd Robin Goodfellow; . . .
> That fright the maidens of the villagery;
> Skim milk; and sometimes labour in the quern;*
> And bootless make the breathless housewife churn;
> And sometimes make the drink to bear no barm;
> Mislead night wand'rers, laughing at their harm."

I think Shakspere must have been at King Oberon's court some time or the other, and that

* Handmill.

his *Midsummer Night's Dream* was no dream after all, but what he saw and felt in Elf-land; so if you want to know about the "good people," read what he has written of them.

As I have said, the story I am about to tell you happened years ago, long before the fairies had left us, and begins at that pleasant time of the year when the trees (like good little folk at school) are putting forth the blossoms which give promise of fruit hereafter. The doors and shutters of Jacob Pout's booth (as a shop was called in those days) were thrown open to let in the little breeze that was playing among the lavender and majoram in the garden at the back of his dwelling, and to let out the whizzing noise of the lathe at which Jacob was at work.

Jacob Pout was a doll-maker, and generally admitted to be the cleverest craftsman in his trade.

He made wooden dolls only, (for no one had as yet thought of making dolls out of wax,) but they were considered marvels of beauty by all the young ladies who were fortunate enough to possess one. They had such red cheeks, such curly hempen wigs, and legs and arms as good as any wooden doll could wish for. And then they were such dolls to last! You might leave them on the window-sill, in the broad glaring sunshine, without their noses melting away; or you might drop them out of the nursery window without damaging more than a leg or an arm, or perhaps only chipping off a little of the paint. I know there was one that descended to six little girls in succession, and at last had lost nothing but its wig and the tip of its nose.

Ah! Jacob Pout ought to have been a happy man, for his customers were always satisfied with

their purchases, and his lathe might have been going every working-day of the week if its owner had not been rather lazy and very envious.

Opposite the doll-maker lived Anthony Stubbs, a clever worker in gold and silver, and moreover, an industrious, good-tempered fellow. The shutter of his booth was always the first to be taken down, and there he might be heard whistling and hammering all day, as cheerful as a lark and as busy as a bee. True, he had not many customers, but then his wares were costly in their material, and took a long time to work into cups, and salvers, and spoons.

Jacob Pout never thought of this as he stood idling his time away at the door of his booth, murmuring within himself that he should have been brought up to doll-making, whilst Tony Stubbs never worked upon anything baser than

silver. And then, when he saw the alderman of the ward tell down upon Tony's counter twenty pounds for a silver tankard, he nearly choked with envy at his neighbour's good fortune, never thinking how many long days it had cost the honest silversmith to hammer into form the dogs and horsemen which made the cup so valuable. Neither did he think how much time and travail had been spent by Tony Stubbs before he acquired the art of chasing gold and silver; for he had gone over the sea as far as Florence, to study in the workshop of the great Benvenuto Cellini, the most renowned craftsman of his time, and whose productions are esteemed to this day the masterpieces of their kind. Jacob Pout never thought of all this, and felt no gratitude for the good with which God had blessed him, but envied Tony his hard-earned gains.

Jacob had passed the greater part of a fine summer's afternoon in this discontented spirit, and, having closed his booth, had taken a long walk into the country. London was not the large city that it is now, and its suburbs were not all brick and mortar as they are at present, but shady woods and open meadows were to be found everywhere around it, and thither would the good citizens resort on high days and holidays. Jacob Pout, idler that he was, made twice as many holidays as any of his neighbours, and there was not a pleasant place in wood or field but Jacob knew of it.

There was no pleasanter spot round London than Maude's Dingle, in the middle of the small wood which skirted the boundary wall of the Priory Garden, at Kilbourne. When the wind set in that direction you could hear Bow Bells plain enough; but, at other times, not a sound of the neighbouring

city could be heard. Here, on the summer's evening to which our tale refers, at the foot of an old gnarled oak, was seated Jacob Pout. A solitary thrush was singing its hymn to the evening; no other sound was heard, except the soft murmurs of the little Bourne, which gave a name to the locality.

The song, both of bird and brook, was lost upon Jacob Pout; for his mind was full of envious and discontented thoughts, which destroyed the charm of all things round about him. His eye looked not upon the velvet sward upon which he was lying; no, he saw only visions of the glittering wares of Tony Stubbs. He heard not the mellow notes of the thrush, nor the tinkling melody of the brook; no, his ear was filled by ideal sounds, like the noise of beaten metals. The twilight came and went, yet there he lay sulky and miserable; he had

no wish to return to the city so long as there was a risk of encountering any one that he knew, for he felt that to "love his neighbour" not "as himself," but even to love him at all, was that night impossible.

The thrush had long since finished its hymn and was at rest; but the little brook could not be silent until it reached the distant river. Jacob heard it at last, and as he listened, the sounds seemed to become more and more distinct, until he thought he could define a tune. Yes, it was a march, and played, so it seemed at least, by drums, trumpets, and cymbals. Every moment it became more audible, and evidently proceeded from a hollow beech tree not twenty yards from him.

As he looked in the direction of the sound, he saw—bless me! how he rubbed his eyes!—he saw coming from a little hole at the foot of the hollow

beech, a procession of pigmy people, all gaily dressed, and marching with measured tread to the

"All gaily dressed and marching."

music of a full band of elfin players. In the midst, seated in a car not bigger than a walnut shell, was a lady, black as an Ethiopian. As the procession came nearer, Jacob saw that she wore armlets and bracelets of gold, and bands of the same precious metal were round her ankles; her dress was of the costliest materials, and made in the picturesque fashion of the East. Jacob felt rather frightened when the procession halted opposite to him, and

his teeth fairly chattered when he saw the Black Fairy descend from her car, and advance, with her maids of honour, directly towards the knoll upon which he was lying.

The Black Fairy evidently noticed his trepidation, for she smiled, not very prettily it must be confessed, but she did smile, as though to give Jacob courage ; but as her condescension appeared to have a contrary effect to that which it was intended to produce—she spoke. Oh! what a voice she had! It was sharp and small, and sounded like the noise produced by blowing in the barrel of a watch-key ; Jacob could hardly hear her words at first, but he became so interested in what she said to him, that, before she had spoken a minute, he could understand every syllable.

"I have often wished to speak to you," said the Black Fairy, "but it would not be considered

etiquette in one of my degree to venture abroad, except by moonlight. I have taken a great fancy to you; I have often heard you grumbling in a manner which has done my heart good, I assure you. I hate people to be contented and grateful; it shows a mean spirit. For my own part, I have never felt satisfied since I was born, and I am now nearly five thousand years old."

"You look remarkably well for your age," remarked Jacob.

"Not I," said the black lady; "I've seen fairies looking much better, who are my seniors by a day or two. But to your own affairs. I have come to take you under my especial protection. You are delightfully envious of that miserable milksop, Tony Stubbs. Ha! Ha! Depend upon it, Jacob, it's not all gold that glitters in that quarter; half his wares are sham, rely upon it. However, you

are a good subject of mine, and deserve to be encouraged."

"Who are you?" *thought* Jacob.

"I am the Fairy Malice," said the black lady; "and I am only sorry that, as you are a mortal, I cannot make you my prime minister; you are admirably qualified for the post. But, never mind; if you can't serve me in Elf-land, you can do so in your own sphere. Tony Stubbs can't be worth, stock and all, more than three hundred pounds."

"Not that," shouted Jacob; "not that. If he were sold up to-morrow two hundred pounds would buy him."

"So much the worse for you, then," said the Black Fairy, "you are one hundred pounds the poorer; for I intend to make you just as rich as Tony Stubbs."

"What a fool I've been," thought Jacob. "This

black hag shouldn't have got off so easily had I known that."

"That's right, abuse me; grumble away," said the Fairy. "I can hear your thoughts, and like you the better for having them. Oh, how I love ingratitude! Now, see what I am going to do for you; look at this." And Jacob saw in the Fairy's hand, an ebony doll not bigger than his little finger; it was exquisitely carved, and had bracelets and armlets and ankle bands of silver. Jacob had never seen anything so well done since he had been a doll-maker.

"What do you think that is?" said the Fairy Malice: "that is an ENCHANTED DOLL. Take it home with you, it will sell for just one hundred pounds, and that sum, with what you are worth already, will place you on an equal footing with Tony Stubbs."

Jacob's eyes glistened with delight.

"So long as you are contented—it breaks my heart to think you may cease to be envious and covetous;—but so long as you are contented, the ENCHANTED DOLL will be of no service to you, but should you again deserve my assistance it will return to you, though her then possessor be living at the Antipodes. Good night, darling!" And then the procession departed in the same order in which it had arrived.

Jacob went home to bed, and slept soundly until daybreak. When he awoke he thought he must have been dreaming. No, there was the ENCHANTED DOLL upon the table.

He soon dressed himself and opened the shutter of his booth; it was a golden morning! He placed the fairy gift upon his board, and sat down to breakfast; but before he had swallowed

a mouthful a strange-looking person entered the shop, and inquired the price of the little black doll.

"One hundred and fifty pounds," answered Jacob.

"Too much," said the stranger, "I am ordered not to exceed one hundred."

There was something in his customer's manner that made Jacob anxious to get rid of him, and, therefore, he did not chaffer about the matter, but took the stranger's money, and gave him the ENCHANTED DOLL.

"What a lucky fellow I am," said Jacob, as the stranger turned to depart.

"Very," said the doll-buyer, "at present."

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

THE ENCHANTED DOLL RETURNS TO JACOB POUT.

ULL of the bargain he had made, Jacob Pout counted over and over again the money he had received for the ENCHANTED DOLL, ringing each coin on his board as loud as he could ring it, in order to attract the attention of the silversmith

over the way. But Tony was too busy with his own work to notice what his neighbour was doing, and kept hammering away, to the great annoyance of the ill-natured doll-maker. Jacob put his money into his pouch, and placing his flat cap jauntily upon one side of his head, took two or three turns in front of the silversmith's booth, rattling the money in his pouch every time that he passed; but his trick was lost upon Tony Stubbs, who never once looked up from his work, but still kept fashioning the lump of silver on his small anvil. Jacob grew desperate, and entered the silversmith's booth.

"Hammering away."

"Good morrow, neighbour Stubbs," said the doll-maker.

"Ah!" replied Tony, "is it you, neighbour Pout? I am very glad to see you; for though we live opposite to each other, we seldom exchange more than a nod from week's end to week's end. But that is my fault. I believe I am always so hard at work that I have no time for a little friendly gossip."

"Just my case, too," said Jacob; "I am always at work;" (what a fib that was!) "I cannot make dolls fast enough to supply my customers," (that was really true, but he might have done so had he been less idle). "But I have no right to grumble; I make money faster than I can spend it;" and Jacob again rattled the coins in his pouch.

"I am rejoiced to hear of your well-doing, neighbour," said Tony, but showing neither by look nor word that he envied Jacob his good fortune. "We have both great reason to be grateful to God."

Jacob gave a short cough, and answered, "Yes!" but gratitude had no place in his heart. He was vexed that the silversmith appeared deaf to the jingling of the money in his pouch, and he resolved to try what the sight of the bright coins would produce.

"I have received a large sum—a *very* large sum —this morning," said Jacob, "and I have some doubt as to the goodness of the coin, which has been paid to me. Will you assay a few pieces for me, neighbour, and set my mind at rest."

"With great pleasure indeed," replied Tony; "let me see them."

"There is a small portion of them," said Jacob, throwing down upon the counter a handful of coins, all seemingly new and bright from the mint.

Tony examined them carefully, and tested them by means known in his art. When he had done

so, he pronounced them to be of the finest silver, and worth even more than their rateable value: "Unless," said Tony, laughing, "they are made of fairy silver, and if so, neighbour, you have made a bad bargain."

"How?" inquired Jacob.

"Some morning you will find them turned into dirt and stones: at least so it runs in the legend," answered Tony.

"I have no fear of that," said Jacob, gathering up his money and pouring it into his pouch with as much display as possible. He then wished the silversmith a good morning, and crossed over to his own booth.

"Fairy silver—ha, ha! dirt and stones," thought Jacob. "I have made him envious at last." And with this bad thought the wicked doll-maker was contented.

At twelve o'clock the next day Tony Stubbs was seen to close the shutter of his booth, and then hurriedly walk eastward.

"Just like me," thought Jacob; "when I have a fit of the spleen I can never rest at home; I will be bound he is off to the woods for the rest of the day. Just like me."

Jacob was mistaken; in an hour or two the silversmith returned, and his hammer was heard ringing long after the usual hour of work. Again, in the morning, his neighbours were awakened, before cock-crow, by the sounds which proceeded from Tony's anvil. And so it was, day after day, the noise only ceasing at very long intervals, except about mid-day, when Tony closed the shutter of his booth and took his hurried walk eastward. All the neighbours remarked that he looked fatigued and unhappy, and the stock of his booth became

less and less in spite of his incessant labour. Something was wrong with the silversmith, and every one pitied him, except the doll-maker.

I dare say you would like to know what took him away from home every day, and made him work early and late, and yet grow poorer and poorer? Well, I will tell you, because I know you are not like Jacob Pout, and I think you will be pleased with what the silversmith has done.

In the easternmost part of the city was a booth, above which was the sign of the Golden Shears, (I shall have to tell you more about signs presently,) a sure indication that the owner pursued the ancient and honourable trade of tailor. The place was very clean, but scantily furnished with broadcloth, serge, and taffety, and for some days no one had been seen at work on the tailor's board but little Tom Tit, the apprentice. A good little fellow he

was, for though he had no one to keep an eye upon him, he never idled away his time, but honestly stuck to the task his master had set him. It was to this shop that the silversmith paid his daily visit, for the tailor was Tony's father.

"Master is better to-day," said Tom Tit about a week after Tony's first journey; "and the alderman's been here who wanted to put master in the Fleet, and said that as you had paid some of the money, he need not be frightened any longer about going to prison."

"The alderman has been very kind, Tom," remarked Tony; "he has given me time to pay his debt, and in a month or so I hope to see my father a free man again. You are a good boy, Tom, and I shall not forget your kindness and service."

Tom tried to say "Thank you, Master Tony," but something in his throat would not let him; he

only wiped his eyes with the back of his hand, and then stitched away ten times harder than ever.

While Tom was doing this, Tony had entered a room upstairs, and kneeling down by the bedside had asked his father's blessing.

The sick man laid his thin hand upon the head of his son, and prayed in silence for a few moments. When he had finished, the old man's eyes filled with tears, whilst a faint smile lighted up his pallid face. "Anthony," said he, "but for your filial love I should now be in a gaol."

"I hardly think that, father," replied Tony, gaily, "for I had no sooner told the alderman how cruelly you had been cheated of your goods, than he offered to forego part of the debt; but this I declined, as the money was justly due."

"You did rightly, my dear son, but it grieves me to think that my misfortunes should have made you

almost a beggar," replied the old man; "but I know that the good God will bless you; perhaps not with wealth, for that is not always a blessing, but with a happy and contented mind, the sure reward of virtuous actions."

You know now why Tony worked early and late, and why he became poorer and poorer every day, until he had made his father a free man; but he had kept his secret quite snug, and, unless I had told you, I am certain you would never have heard a word about it. Well, it was on May-day that Tony went to the alderman to make the last payment of his father's debt: May-day was a great holiday in the old time, and the young Londoners used to go to the neighbouring woods to bring home the May-pole, which was a straight tree shorn of its branches and dressed out with gay streamers of ribbons and garlands of flowers. They

used to dance round the May-pole to the music of a pipe and tabor, and sing merry songs in praise of Maid Marian and Robin Hood; but I question whether the lady or gentleman deserved such honour. Sometimes there were grand pageants of knights in armour, and morris-dancers covered over with bells and ribbons. May-day is but a shabby affair now-a-days, with its tawdry "My Lord" and "My Lady," and would be worth nothing without Jack-in-the-Green.

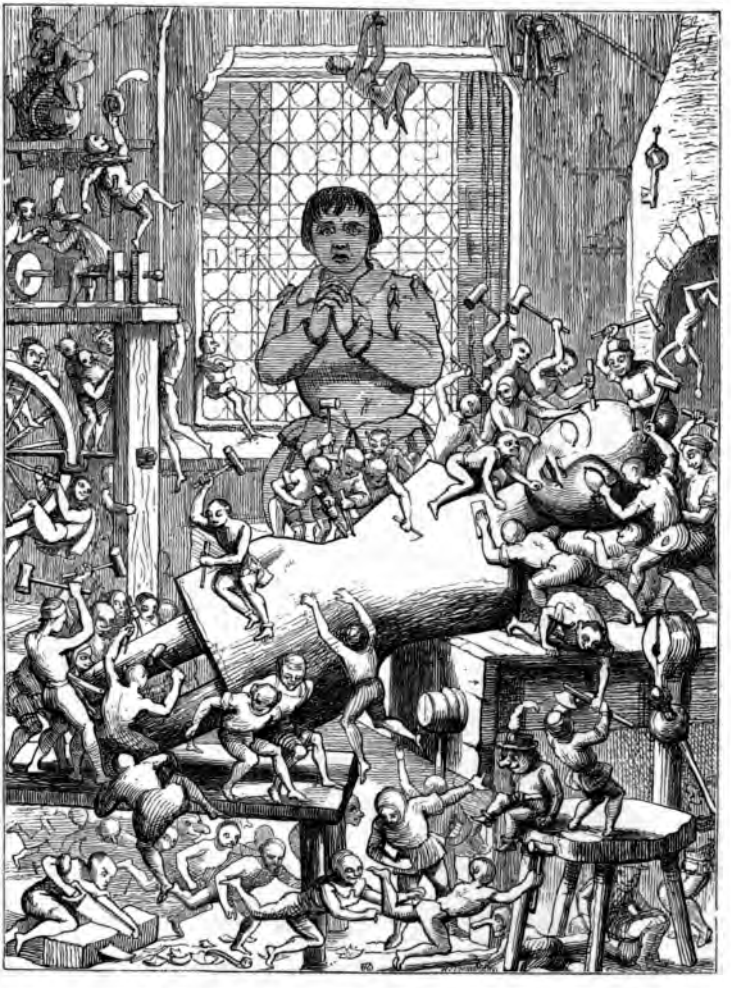
There had never been a grander pageant than the one in Fenchurch Street on the morning when Tony Stubbs paid Alderman Kersey the balance of his father's debt; "all the world and his wife" had come out to see it, and where there was a sight to be seen there Jacob Pout was sure to be. Yes; he was the foremost in the crowd, shouting more loudly and pushing more rudely than any

one else. He had received one or two blows on his crown from the staves of the javelin-men who were keeping clear the passage to the stand set apart for the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, and some of their friends, the richest merchants in the City. As the different aldermen passed along they were cheered and saluted by the by-standers, for in those days it was considered a great honour to be a member of the corporation of London. Even Jacob Pout took off his cap as Alderman Kersey passed by, and it was not until the worthy magistrate stopped to speak to some one he recognised in the crowd, that Jacob perceived he was hanging on the arm of—Tony Stubbs. On they went, until they came to the Lord Mayor's stand, the steps of which they ascended together. There they stood, in the midst of the grandees of the great city of London; many of whom came to Tony and took

him kindly by the hand. Jacob Pout could hardly believe his eyes; but what he saw was the truth, nevertheless. The alderman had told a great number of his friends the story of Tony's conduct, and so pleased were they with his filial love and honesty, that all resolved to befriend him as much as they could.

Jacob did not remain to see any more of the show, but walked home as fast as he could and shut himself up in his workshop. The sun shone brightly into the room, but Jacob drew the curtain to prevent the cheerful light from gaining admission; for his heart was full of envy and all uncharitableness, and the pleasant sunlight annoyed him. At last twilight came, and then night; the moon shone clear and bright, and sent a light into the room in spite of the curtain.

As Jacob sat brooding over what he had seen,



"AND SAW A SWARM OF LITTLE FAIRIES BUSILY ENGAGED IN SHAPING A LARGE BLOCK OF EBONY INTO THE RUDE FORM OF A DOLL."—*Page* 133.

the wheel of his lathe turned round, slowly at first, and then revolved with the greatest rapidity. Jacob started up in surprise, and saw a swarm of little fairies busily engaged in shaping a large block of ebony into the rude form of a doll. The chips of hard wood flew about in all directions; and the wheel whizzed round like a mad thing. At length the lathe ceased, and Jacob saw the pigmies, with chisels and mallets, fashion the head and limbs into the exact resemblance, only a hundred times larger, of the ENCHANTED DOLL he had brought away from Maude's Dingle.

When the fairies had finished their work, they expressed their delight by playing about in the most fantastic manner; now swinging by cobwebs from the ceiling, then climbing up the legs of the table and turning head over heels from that frightful precipice on to the ground. At length Jacob heard

the same music he had heard in the woods, and saw the Fairy Malice and her elfin train come forth from a mouse-hole in the corner of the room.

"Well, Jacob, my dear child," said the black lady, "I am glad you have come to your senses again; I was afraid you would never more be envious enough to release the ENCHANTED DOLL from the power of her last possessor. You see, it gives my people some trouble to restore her form, but never mind about that; you are such a dear envious creature that I could do anything for you."

"But what can this lump of wood do for me? Can it introduce me to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, and make me as great a man as Tony Stubbs seems likely to be?" said Jacob, with a sneer.

"That's right, dear; abuse my gift, sneer at

me; I like to see you ungrateful," exclaimed the fairy.

"Besides, who will buy such a lumbering thing as this? The ENCHANTED DOLL was a wonder in doll-making, but this is a clumsy—ugly——"

"Stop, dear, stop," said the fairy; "the increased size of the doll is all owing to the increase of your desires, and so it will be, my pretty one, until—but you must excuse me for the present: I have to attend a family party in the dog-star." And without further ceremony, she and her elfin troop disappeared down the mouse-hole.

In the morning Jacob placed the ENCHANTED DOLL on his board; but though a number of persons stopped to look at it, no one seemed disposed to become a purchaser.

Meanwhile, the shop of the silversmith began to assume a very improved appearance, for the alder-

man and his friends had given Tony as much work as he could do ; and such was Jacob Pout's envy, that I think he would never have sold his ENCHANTED DOLL (for it was only when he was contented that he could part with it), had not Tony fallen dangerously sick, and Jacob envied him no longer.

When reading was a much rarer accomplishment than it is now, and but few of the porters and servants of the citizens knew even the letters of the alphabet, the shopkeepers of London used to hang, in the front of their houses, pictures and models, which were called signs, to enable persons to distinguish one trader from another. Some of the devices used were very curious, and among those which have come down to us, none seems less suited to the trade which it designates than the Black Doll, which we have

all seen hanging over the door of the marine-store dealer.

I have no doubt that our ENCHANTED DOLL

"The Black Doll."

was the original of the sign, for it was Tristram Tattersall, dealer in ship's stores, who became the new possessor of Jacob's fairy gift. He had it a great bargain, for it only cost him a few pounds and (at Jacob's earnest solicitation) a seat at the Lord Mayor's dinner; for even in the old time

good eating was a favourite pastime with the citizens of London.

Jacob enjoyed himself greatly during the early part of the banquet; he ate of everything that looked luscious and tempting, chuckling all the time at the thought that poor Tony was lying in a sick chamber taking nothing but physic, which was then quite as unpleasant in flavour as it is at present. As the feast proceeded, Jacob drunk so much wine that he became very noisy and troublesome, and before the dinner was over the attendants of the Lord Mayor were compelled to carry the doll-maker out of the Guildhall. It was even said that, for more than an hour, he sat in the stocks, to the great delight of a number of little boys in Cheap.

Before we finish this chapter, you will be glad to know that Tony became a great deal better,

and that Alderman Kersey called upon him daily; and at length, when Tony was able to sit up, the

"He sat in the stocks."

good alderman took his only daughter, Dorothy, to see him, and there is great reason to believe that the silversmith improved rapidly after the visit.

And Jacob Pout was more envious of his neighbour than ever.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

JACOB GOES TO A BEAR GARDEN, AND AFTERWARDS TO A CHRISTMAS PARTY.

S the money which Jacob had received from Tristram Tattersall was soon expended, for the doll-maker had resolved to make what he called "a figure in the world;" and he did so to the

great amusement of his neighbours, among whom he was no favourite, as his envy and selfishness were well known. He dressed himself in the extreme of the fashion, which was most fantastic and ridiculous. He had a monstrous ruff round his neck, which made his closely-cropped head look like a small dumpling in a large platter. He wore stockings of two colours, and bows in his shoes. His breeches were so puffed out about the hips with buckram and wadding that his body seemed to rest upon two drumsticks. How the plain, sober citizens laughed at him as he strutted up and down the street with the intention of exciting the envy and admiration of his neighbours! When he thought he had accomplished his object, he resolved to favour the court end of the town with a visit. As he could not walk with any comfort, he made his way to London Bridge stairs, and

hailing a waterman, got into a boat, and desired to be taken to the palace at Westminster. There were no hackney coaches in those days, and persons of all ranks used "the silent highway" (as the River Thames has been called) when they wished to avoid the bustle and noise of the streets.

"He was jeered and laughed at."

The watermen were generally quick-witted fellows, from being brought in contact with the many people who rode in their boats, and, being bold and impudent, they did not hesitate to pass some very free remarks upon the patrons of each other. You can imagine how Jacob must have fared in his progress up the river, seated, as he was, in the stern of the boat, in

his large breeches and ruff, and a little peaked hat with a cock-tail feather in it. Some said he looked like a peg-top turned upside down, whilst others compared him to a Dutch dram-bottle. Jacob was very angry at first, but became reconciled to his situation when his cunning sculler told him (seeing what a vain fellow he was) that "it was the custom of the river for the low watermen to jibe at all the noblemen and gentry about the court."

When they arrived at Westminster, Jacob was astonished at the large sum demanded by the waterman for rowing him so short a distance, but when he was assured that the scullers "never carried noblemen for less," Jacob pulled out his purse with an air and paid the money. Poor dolt! if he had only known how he was jeered and laughed at the moment his back was turned; for persons who

pretend to be other than they really are will at all times be exposed to ridicule and imposition.

"Are you for the bear-baiting to-day," said a gaily dressed young man to Jacob, shortly after he had landed; "rare sport is expected, I am told, and the best of the nobility and gentry are to be present."

"Why, sir," replied Jacob, "I have never seen a bear baited. Is the Bear Garden easy of access?"

"It is if you have friends," returned the young man; "I shall be happy to introduce you; I am of the Duke of Northumberland's household, and shall be glad to be of service to so brave a gentleman."

Jacob thanked him for his politeness, and wished heartily that his city neighbours could see him in such good company. Good company, indeed! The young fellow was a London foist, or thief,

who instantly saw that Jacob was a very likely person to be imposed upon; so whilst the inflated doll-maker thought he was in the society of a duke's gentleman, he was but the companion of a rogue and a vagabond.

When they came to the Bear Garden, Jacob's friend suddenly discovered that he had no money; of course the doll-maker was too glad to lend a piece of gold to such a desirable acquaintance. None but the best seats would serve the turn of Jacob and his friend, and they were therefore conducted by one of the bear-wards to the gallery set aside for the most distinguished ladies and gentlemen.

"Ladies in a bear garden?" Yes, in the "good old times," of which we hear so much, the most cruel sports were witnessed by gentlewomen, who from their earliest childhood were accustomed to

the dogs, for the victim and its tormentors were alike subject to pain and injury, but proceed with our story. The sport was at an end, and the visitors were leaving their seats, when a loud outcry was raised in that part of the garden where Jacob and his friend had taken their position. "Here's a thief, bear-ward," cried one, seizing the duke's gentleman.

"Here's his comrade," shouted another, taking a firm hold of Jacob's ponderous ruff.

The bear-wards were not slow in securing the denounced persons, as their show was likely to suffer in the estimation of the public from the presence of thieves, and without much parley they hurled Jacob and his distinguished acquaintance into the arena, where the bear was still chained to the post. The poor brute, smarting from his previous ill-treatment, and fearing, no doubt, that the

new comers were also his enemies, made two or three blows at the doll-maker, who chanced to roll near to him, and rent Jacob's fine clothes into shreds, and with his sharp claws scratched the face of the duke's gentleman. The ridiculous appear-

"Scratched the face of the duke's gentleman."

ance of the suspected thieves roused the mirth of the assemblage, and even the angry bear-wards could not help laughing heartily.

"Let them go now, Robert," said a young nobleman and a great patron of the bear-garden; "they are well served for their knavish practices."

The bear-ward, obedient to his patron's command, conducted the two suspected rogues to the door, and giving each a sound rap with his quarter-staff, bid them not venture within his walls again, at the peril of their ears.

The duke's gentleman instantly took to his heels, and Jacob, ragged, bruised and disgraced, walked hurriedly to the river-side, intending to take water to the City, but he found that his ill reputation had preceded him, and he was only jeered and ill-used by the watermen. In this tattered condition, therefore, he was obliged to take his way homeward, accompanied by a troop of the rabble, who are always inclined to enjoy the misfortunes of any one.

More than a week had passed since this unlucky occurrence, and Jacob Pout had never crossed the threshold of his booth, for he thought that the

story was known among his neighbours, and he feared to encounter their jokes and laughter. The good-natured silversmith became at length greatly concerned for his neighbour, and resolved to pay him a visit. When Tony got to the doll-maker's door he was surprised to see Jacob with a large axe endeavouring to cut in pieces a beautiful black doll, dressed like an Eastern princess, but the hard ebony resisted every effort made to destroy it. Jacob's old friend had come back to him, but larger than before, for his envy and hatred of his neighbours had increased greatly since his own misfortune. During the week that Jacob had shut himself up he had had no other companion but the ENCHANTED DOLL, and that at last become so intolerable to him that he resolved to cut it in pieces and burn it; but his fairy gift was not to be so easily disposed of.

"Good morrow, neighbour Pout," said Tony, holding out his hand, which the other took with evident confusion, but the silversmith attributed Jacob's coolness to his recent misfortune, and not to the real cause, which was the presence of the ENCHANTED DOLL.

"What a capital piece of workmanship," said Tony; "I think I never saw anything so exquisitely made. Surely you were not cutting this up for firewood?"

Jacob stammered out something about nobody buying black dolls, as silly little girls were frightened at black people.

"What is the price of it?" inquired Tony. "I have been thinking for a long time of a sign for my booth, and the Indian Princess would be a very good one for my craft. What is the price, neighbour?"

Jacob was delighted at the thought of getting

rid of what had become to him a horrible thing, and he therefore named a very small sum.

"Agreed!" said Tony, "I will buy it of you, provided you go with me to-night and spend Christmas Eve at the house of a kind friend of mine. I will promise you a hearty welcome."

Jacob was willing to consent to any terms—even had they been less agreeable than those proposed by the silversmith.

"Then bring the sign over to my booth as soon as you like, and I will pay you the money," said Tony, "and I hope that when you see your handicraft over my door you will think oftener of its owner, and call upon me as a neighbour should do."

Tony shook Jacob heartily by the hand, and then took his leave.

"You shall not wait long for your bargain," said

the doll-maker, as soon as Tony's back was turned. "An Indian Princess, forsooth! Will nothing suit you for a sign but an Indian Princess? Well, I'll gratify your proud stomach, and rid me of this odious piece of fairy work."

Jacob Pout took the ENCHANTED DOLL in his arms with the intention of carrying it to the silversmith, but at every step he made towards his own door the doll became heavier and heavier, until at last he was obliged to place it on the floor, quite unable to carry it any further. The ENCHANTED DOLL could only be parted with when Jacob ceased to be envious and discontented, and at that moment he envied everybody.

The ENCHANTED DOLL did not remain long quiet, but hopped back in the oddest way imaginable to the little room at the back of the shop.

"I'll not endure this!" cried Jacob, in a great

fury, "I will take it to Tony Stubbs, and he shall keep it;" but he was reckoning without the ENCHANTED DOLL, which then began to hop about the room, over the chairs, and on to the bed, and the great walnut-tree chest in which Jacob kept his Sunday clothes. The doll-maker pursued it as fast as he was able, but the ENCHANTED DOLL always contrived to elude his grasp, until, heated and exhausted, Jacob threw himself on a chair and fairly cried with vexation.

We will leave him to himself if you please, and take an imaginary stroll to Holbourne, as it was in the time of the ENCHANTED DOLL.

There are very few houses to be seen, but all are of a substantial character, and evidently belonging to persons of large means. The gardens in front are kept with great care, and though it is winter-time the broad gravel paths have not a

withered leaf upon them. In the parlour windows of one or two of the houses a scarlet geranium is to be seen: in others are ostrich's eggs suspended by silk cords from the ceiling, and here and there are beautiful yellow canary birds, and in one that rare creature, a cockatoo, all presents, no doubt, from sea captains who make the long voyage to the warm countries of the East. That clear, swift stream is the Fleet River (the time will come when it will be a foul ditch), and that large brick house with the bow-windows, lighted from within by a blazing fire, is the dwelling of Alderman Kersey. As we are friends of Tony Stubbs, I am sure he will be glad to welcome us. Here we are in the hall. As it is Christmas time there is a table loaded with good cheer, to which all comers are welcome; and those happy-looking folk crowding round the large sea-coal fire are drinking to the

good alderman's health in double ale. This way leads to the principal sitting-room. The floor is strewn with dry rushes and lavender, for the rich Turkey carpet is thought too beautiful to tread upon, and it is therefore thrown over the carved table which stands in the centre of the room. The embroidery on the high backs of the chairs is all the work of Miss Dorothy's fingers, who stands arranging her pretty curls by that mirror of polished steel in a velvet-covered framework, whilst her mother and the maids decorate the buffet with the "white plate," which is only displayed on high-days and holidays. From the bosses and pendants of the ceiling hang bunches of red-berried holly and beaded mistletoe intermingled with bows of gay coloured ribbons. The door opposite leads to the kitchen, which looks like a green bower, so thickly is it covered with ivy and holly. The pewter

platters on the shelves shine as brightly as the silver ware in the parlour, and as dinner has been long past (for it is nearly four o'clock) the servants are preparing for the dance which is to take place in the evening. Before the huge fire sits the turnspit, dozing and enjoying the warmth after the labours of the morning. Poor dog! he has to work hard at feast-times. He sits up (as our little dog Timber does when he begs) and with his short fore legs turns the great spit, which bends with the weight of the mighty baron of beef. But his work is over for the day. Here are the fiddlers, who

"Arranging her pretty curls."

prepare themselves for their forthcoming exertions by a hearty assault on the beef and ale. And here come the guests. Those are the alderman's clerks and warehousemen, with their wives and sweethearts. Those two lads shaking hands with Mrs. Kersey and Dorothy are the alderman's apprentices, and the persons just entering the hall are neighbours and old customers of the house, with their wives, sons, and daughters. There are old Mr. Stubbs, and good little Tom Tit! Those two who have just entered I hope you know by this time. Tony Stubbs is heartily welcomed by the alderman and Mrs. Kersey, whilst both Dorothy and the silversmith meet each other kindly, but rather sheepishly. What *can* be the reason? for he has asked her to dance the first dance with him, and Dorothy has answered "Yes, thank you," although her face is red with blushes. Jacob

Pout has been introduced to the alderman and his family by Tony, but the doll-maker seems to be ill at ease with his new friends.

There go the fiddles! The alderman and a buxom dame of forty lead off, whilst old Mr. Stubbs has the honour of following with Mrs. Kersey; Tony and Dorothy are in the middle of the set and dancing merrily, to the great admiration of the servants, who one and all take part in the dance. What peals of laughter are heard every now and then as some blunder is made in the figure, when Charles, who should have turned to the right, wheels round to the left, and bumps against Mary, who nearly tumbles over Kate, who falls into the arms of Walter, whilst Frank, and Alfred, and Sidney clap their hands and declare that Kate did it on purpose. What a shout of laughter! Huzza! Alderman Kersey has kissed

his partner under the mistletoe. There's romping! All the women are pretending to run away from

"Under the mistletoe."

the kissing-bough, and all the men are dragging them back again; all but Jacob Pout.

Another dance, and another, and blind man's buff and hot cockles have brought us to supper time. All the young men assist in laying out the tables and placing the benches round them. What

a huge Christmas pie is drawn from the oven where it has been quietly baking unknown to every one but the good-tempered cook and her mistress. There's the baron of beef which the poor little turnspit roasted yesterday, and yonder comes

"Pretty Dorothy has nodded to him."

John, the alderman's apprentice, bearing the pride of the Christmas feast, the boar's head, decked out with twigs of rosemary. Can you not smell the spiced wine that is steaming in the silver flagon which the alderman bought of Tony? who thought not when he sold it that he should ever drink from it as a guest, and perhaps something more, for

pretty Dorothy has nodded to him before she tastes the reaming liquor.

Supper is over, and the kitchen again cleared for dancing; certainly the fiddlers play better than they did before, and everybody dances with twice as much spirit. Everybody seems merrier and happier, except Jacob Pout, who is stealing away from the house and taking the road to the Fields at Finsbury.

You had better remain with the pleasant people at Alderman Kersey's, and join in the carol which will be sung at midnight to usher in the coming Christmas-day. Besides, there will be other games of blind man's buff, hot cockles, and forfeits, and I have no doubt, snap-dragon and hunt the slipper. I will follow Jacob Pout and tell you all that happened in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

JACOB PARTS FROM THE ENCHANTED DOLL AT LAST.

LONG ere Jacob went forth from the house of Alderman Kersey, the noiseless snow had been falling fast; but nevertheless the doll-maker pursued his way to the fields, quite regardless of

the weather. "It is as plain as the nose on my face," thought Jacob, "the alderman's daughter is to be the wife of Tony Stubbs, and then, of course, the alderman's wealth will all come to Tony, and who knows but some day or other he may become Lord Mayor of London. Just like his luck. A mean sneaking fellow as he is: always pretending to be at work; never taking a day's holiday except upon the regular feasts and festivals. I hate him! I don't know why, but I can't help it."

I could have told him the reason. Jacob was like many other people in the world who envy and hate every one more successful than themselves.

The moon was shining brightly in the heavens, and the beautiful snow (which seems to have been made for moonlight) sparkled like powdered diamonds. The trees which had lately stretched forth their bare limbs, as though in supplication to the

distant spring-time to come and clothe them, were now bending beneath the pearly garlands. Here and there were dark masses of buildings, from whose chimneys the graceful smoke was winding upwards; the windows were glowing with the lights within, and the pleasant sounds of music and merry voices seemed to come forth to greet each other in the silent fields. Jacob was sick with envy.

The path (which Jacob had tracked with some difficulty) was crossed by a stile, and as he felt wearied by his walk, he resolved to rest there for a time, and then return home. As he drew near to the stile, he saw on the topmost rail some living thing, which moved rapidly from one end to the other. He continued to approach, until he was close enough to discover that it was no other than his dingy patroness, the Fairy Malice. She was evidently in a very ill humour, in fact she seemed

to be in a positive rage, for she walked with her arms folded together, and her little black lips compressed as closely as though they had been glued to each other. Now and then she would stop, stamp her tiny foot, and shake her clenched pigmy hand in the air. Jacob felt desirous to avoid her, and was about to make a hasty retreat, but the fairy was too quick for him.

"Stay where you are," she screamed as loudly as she could. "Stay where you are, or I will rack every nerve in your body."

Jacob felt quite powerless.

"So, you graceless fellow," continued the Fairy. "You thought to go unpunished for your cruel treatment of that priceless treasure, The ENCHANTED DOLL. You thought you could hack its beauteous limbs and batter its delicate body with impunity, did you? You thought that precious

creature was only hewn out of an insensible log, like your own abominable toys, and could be made into

"As he drew near to the stile he saw."

fire-wood at your will and pleasure? Look here, every blow that you inflicted on that incomparable being was by elfish sympathy endured by me," and the fairy pointed to her bandaged arms and legs, which had hitherto escaped the notice of Jacob.

"But I will be revenged. I am here to-night to punish your brutality and ingratitude. It is not often that you find fairies out on a snowy night like this, but my people shall have plenty of work to keep them warm, I warrant you. Advance, archers! and give this ungrateful mortal a proof of your ability."

Jacob heard the old march played, and the surface of the snow swarmed with black fairies. Their bright helmets and breastplates glittered in the moonlight as they deployed before their potent ruler, until at last they formed themselves into columns and marched past the terror-stricken Jacob, who, in a few minutes, found himself completely surrounded by the pigmy army. The officers of the different companies then advanced towards each other, and having conferred for a few seconds returned to their respective places, and, at

a signal from the commander-in-chief, led their men still closer to Jacob. They then halted, and

"A myriad of arrows."

instantly a myriad of arrows, as fine as hairs, flew

"Jacob roared with pain."

from their bows into the body of the unhappy doll-maker. Jacob roared with pain, but found himself deprived of motion.

The Fairy Malice rubbed her hands with delight, and laughed long and loud at the torture of the unhappy doll-maker.

"Well done, my gallant archers! well done!" cried the black lady. "Let our cavalry acquit themselves as well and they shall be rewarded. Charge!"

As she screamed out her command a humming noise was heard in the air, and a legion of fairies, mounted upon horned beetles, flew at the head and hands of the doll-maker; who, powerless to defend himself, endured intolerable pain from the lances of his foes. Malice was more delighted than before, and laughed so immoderately that she was obliged to lean, from exhaustion, upon her attendants. When she had recovered her breath sufficiently to speak, she addressed Jacob as follows:—

"Master Doll-maker, you now know what it is

to injure a fairy, and especially the Fairy Malice. As I think I have punished you sufficiently this time, you may go home, Jacob. We are friends again."

"Never!" cried Jacob. "Never! I will throw your horrible gift into the river."

"Don't," said Malice; "if you do it will swim, and come back to you again."

"I will burn it, then!" exclaimed Jacob, almost beside himself with rage. "I'll consume it to ashes, and cast them to the winds."

"Try such a thing at your peril," screamed the fairy; "torture that charming creature with fire, and you shall rue the day. You shall."

"I defy you! You and your enchantments," roared Jacob.

"Ha! ha!"—and all the fairies laughed in concert.

"Your own bad heart gives me the power over you, and until *that* changes you are the slave of my servant." So saying the fairy waved her wand, and the bright moonlight was instantly changed

"Surrounded by myriads of bats."

into darkness. At first Jacob thought a black cloud had passed between him and the moon, but he discovered to his great dismay that he was surrounded by myriads of bats. He found, however, that the power of motion was restored to him, and began to run homewards as he thought, but the

bats flew with him, and, unable to see his path, he was presently crashing through the thin ice of a pond, from which he emerged dripping with water and shivering with cold. Fear still impelled him onward, but with no better success, and it was not until the church bells of London rung out in concert the advent of the day of promise of "Peace and good will to men," and from mansion and cottage a thousand voices were heard carolling a welcome to the blessed Christmas-tide, that his tormentors quitted him. Jacob found he was some distance from home, and it was not without great difficulty, bruised and tired as he was, that he reached the door of his own booth as the sun rose on the Christmas morning.

All the way home Jacob has been contrasting his miserable condition with the happy position of Tony Stubbs, never considering that the silver-

smith owed his prosperity to his own industry and honourable conduct. "Had it not been for him," thought Jacob, as he unlocked the door of his shop, "I should never have gone to the woods and found this accursed fairy gift, which I can never part with so long as I am envious, and envious I shall be until Tony Stubbs is a beggar!"

Thus musing, the doll-maker entered his bed-chamber, and there was the ENCHANTED DOLL larger and more hideous than ever.

The morning wore on, and Jacob very miserable still sat at the window, gazing intently at his neighbour's house. By and by the door opened, and Bridget, Tony's old housekeeper, came out dressed in her best bib and tucker, a sure sign that she was going to make holiday. In a few minutes more the silversmith made his ap-

pearance, and locking the door, strangely enough walked away leaving the key in the lock. Perhaps he was thinking of pretty Dorothy Kersey—no matter.

Jacob saw all this, but instead of doing the part of a good neighbour by calling Tony back, the wicked doll-maker hoped that the key would attract the attention of some thief who would not hesitate to plunder the silversmith. With this bad feeling Jacob Pout watched all day at the window, but no one passed and saw the key. As the evening set in, Jacob's thoughts grew worse and worse, until at last it occurred to him to carry the DOLL over to his neighbour's house, and there, by kindling a fire, destroy at once the wealth which he envied and the creature which he dreaded. To his surprise he found the ENCHANTED DOLL as light as a feather, and taking it in his arms he

carried it over to his neighbour's house. In a few minutes he returned, and taking his seat again at the window prepared to watch the result of the wickedness he had done. Presently a stream of dark coloured smoke issued from the crevices in the shutters of Tony's booth, and then a bright red flame crept out and showed that the fire was raging fiercely within. Unfortunately for the silversmith, as this was Christmas time the streets were quite empty, and the city watch had taken so much good cheer during the day that they were sleeping at their posts, or the fire might possibly have been discovered and extinguished, but as it was, the wicked doll-maker was the only person who knew of it.

Jacob Pout was rejoicing in the success of his malice and wickedness, when to his great horror he saw Tony's door fly open, and from it come the

ENCHANTED DOLL, a glowing mass of fire, and make directly for his own booth.—In a minute the room in which he was sitting became filled with smoke, and he heard the wood in his workshop crackling with the flames.—At the same moment, a great noise at a distance in the street told him that the conflagrations were observed, and Jacob rushed out just as the city watch came up with their ladders and fire-buckets. By great exertion the fire in Tony's house was put out, but nothing seemed to have power over that which was consuming the booth of the doll-maker.

Jacob stood stupified for some time; at last it occurred to him that the first money which he had received for the ENCHANTED DOLL was locked up in his old walnut-tree chest, and without a moment's pause he dashed through the flames to secure his treasure; although the room was full of

fire and smoke, Jacob contrived to open the chest, but lo! there was nothing but dirt and stones, for the coins he had received were all of Fairy silver! His disappointment was so great that he remained kneeling by the side of the chest until the flames gathered all around him, and he would no doubt have perished, had not a young man forced his way through the fire and dragged the bewildered doll-maker into the street.

The rescuer and the rescued were both nearly suffocated by the heat and smoke, and it was not until some minutes had elapsed that Jacob could find sense or words to thank his preserver. What must have been his feelings when he found that to Tony Stubbs he was indebted for his preservation.

"This is a sad night for us both, neighbour Pout," said the silversmith, "but worse for you

than for me. You have lost all, but my shop only has suffered by the flames, some of my wares are damaged, but a little later to bed and a little earlier to rise will put all that right. But neighbour," and Tony paused, greatly moved by the expression of Jacob's face, "you are in great pain! and no wonder, for your arm is flayed bare. Here! some one run for a surgeon whilst I help him to bed."

The doll-maker from shame and suffering could make no answer, but allowed the much injured Tony to lead him to a bed.

The surgeon came, and pronounced Jacob's state to be very desperate, and desired that he should be kept perfectly quiet, or he would not answer for his life a day. And so for many days Tony Stubbs could not take any steps to repair the damage done by the fire, in case he should

disturb his suffering neighbour, but devoted all his time to watching by his bed-side, and, with the aid of old Bridget, preparing and applying the cooling cataplasms ordered for his relief.

Some three weeks had passed since the night of the fire, and Jacob was able to sit up in a chair, and now and then, by the aid of his kind nurse, to walk a few times up and down his room. Still he was very weak, and continued to suffer great pain from the burns which he had received.

One night Tony had retired to rest after talking very cheerfully, and telling how little damage the fire had done his wares, and promising Jacob, that as soon as he was well enough to pursue his calling, a new lathe should be bought, and a booth furnished for him.

One would have thought that so much kindness from a person he had wronged so deeply would

have awakened nothing but feelings of gratitude in Jacob Pout, but envy, hatred, and malice, had been too long the cherished passions of his breast, to be dismissed without a struggle.

"So!" thought Jacob; "it seems I am to be indebted for my daily bread to the man I have most hated and envied! Just like my luck! Whilst not one stick of my booth or stock is left

"He is to marry pretty Dorothy Kersey."

unconsumed, this fellow can laugh at his loss and afford to lend me money to boot. He will be richer shortly, for everybody says he is to marry pretty Dorothy Kersey. What has he done to deserve this?"

"What, indeed!" said a shrill voice close to his ear.

Jacob shook from head to foot, for he knew it was the Black Fairy who had spoken.

"What, indeed!" repeated the Fairy. "He envies nobody! He sets fire to no man's dwelling! He thinks not only of his own dear self! Fool that he is! But you, my darling, deserve all you get, and a great deal more into the bargain."

"Leave me!" cried Jacob, "leave me! I wish to have done with you for ever."

"How very cruel of you," sobbed the Fairy, "after all I have suffered for you. Why, I have not yet recovered from the effects of the fire; neither has your pretty pet, the ENCHANTED DOLL!"

"Recovered!" gasped Jacob. "Surely it was consumed in the flames!"

"Not so, dear," replied the Fairy, with the most horrible grin. "I was afraid at one time that this silversmith might have been the death of her, but your love and constancy have quite worked a cure. She is beside you!"

And there it was, sure enough, charred and almost shapeless, but still with enough of form left to distinguish the ENCHANTED DOLL.

The next morning Jacob was much worse. He was in a high state of fever, and wandering and raving in his sleep like one mad. The doctor could not account for the change, and appeared greatly perplexed what to do. However, he prescribed certain remedies, which had the effect of composing the patient, but not of restoring him to consciousness. Jacob continued in this state for more than three days. When at last his reason returned to him, he heard the sweet voice of a

woman earnestly engaged in prayer for his recovery. The suppliant entreated God to restore the sufferer to reason, that he might not die in his sin; but to grant him life, that he might repent of the evil of his ways, and obtain pardon and salvation.

Jacob's heart was softened, and the tears rolled down his cheeks as fast as they did down those of Dorothy (for it was she who prayed for him); and when the prayer was finished, Jacob breathed a fervent "Amen!"

As country air was considered to be necessary for Jacob's recovery, Alderman Kersey had him taken in a litter to his house at Holbourne, where —thanks to the careful nursing of Mrs. Kersey and the gentle Dorothy—he was gradually restored to health.

And what became of the ENCHANTED DOLL?

You shall hear.

From the hour that Jacob said "Amen!" to Dorothy's prayer, his cruel tormentor began to diminish in size, until, the day before his removal to the house of Alderman Kersey, it had dwindled down to the length of a little finger. It would have gone away altogether, but Jacob could not help (from long habit) altogether at times contrasting his condition with that of Tony Stubbs, and wishing—for a very little while—that he and the silversmith could change places.

One morning towards the end of May, the bells of Holbourne church were ringing merrily. All the people at Alderman Kersey's were dressed in their holiday clothes, decked out with large bows of white ribbon, and went smiling about the house as though some happy event had occurred in the family. And so there had! Dorothy Kersey had

become the wife of Tony Stubbs. There never was a happier bridal party. Never was? There never could be! And Jacob Pout had been to church to see the marriage ceremony performed; and as he knelt beside them at the altar, he had prayed that God would bless them and reward them for all the good they had done to him, and pardon him all the evil he had done them.

From some strange impulse Jacob (who was now quite strong again) resolved in the afternoon to go to Maude's Dingle. When he arrived there he soon found the knoll on which he had sat when he received his fatal fairy gift, and down he threw himself, rather wearied by his walk. The thrush was singing, and Jacob thought the bird's song seemed full of thankfulness, and that the little brook ran babbling on of a thousand happy things!

He wondered he had never thought so before, until he remembered the evil passions which had hitherto been his companions when he visited the pleasant dingle.

Jacob went back with a light heart to the alderman, and joined heartily in the merry-making. He bade the musicians play their merriest tunes, and was, in fact, the last person left dancing at the end of a jovial reel.

When the guests had left, Jacob went up to his bedchamber and opened a little box, in which he kept his ENCHANTED DOLL, but to his great joy he discovered that it had vanished!—for Jacob had ceased to envy—even a little.

The doll-maker was set up in business by his kind friends, Alderman Kersey and Tony Stubbs; and, through the influence of the former, Jacob received a commission from the Lord Mayor to

execute two of the largest dolls in the kingdom. I will not vouch for the fact, but it is more than suspected that Gog and Magog, which occupy so prominent a position in the Guildhall of London, are the identical dolls made by Jacob Pout.

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